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Of all created things, the loveliest
And most divine, are children.

— William Canton.

Gokulam

Vol III, No. 2

August 1990

Dear children,

We celebrate our country's independence on the 15th of this month. But how many of us know what it really means?

The concept of independence actually begins with each and every one of us. It means that you and I think for ourselves, act as we think right, and accept responsibility for our mistakes. And being independent requires a lot of courage.

Beginning with the little things at home — like looking after your own belongings, doing your home-work without your parents repeatedly reminding you, keeping your room clean...

Like the little drops of water that form the ocean, independence in little things goes a long way!

With love,



Editor.





An exciting tale
told by grandpa...

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Beginning a new
geography fea-
ture.....

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A play about the
founder of the
Mughal Dynasty...

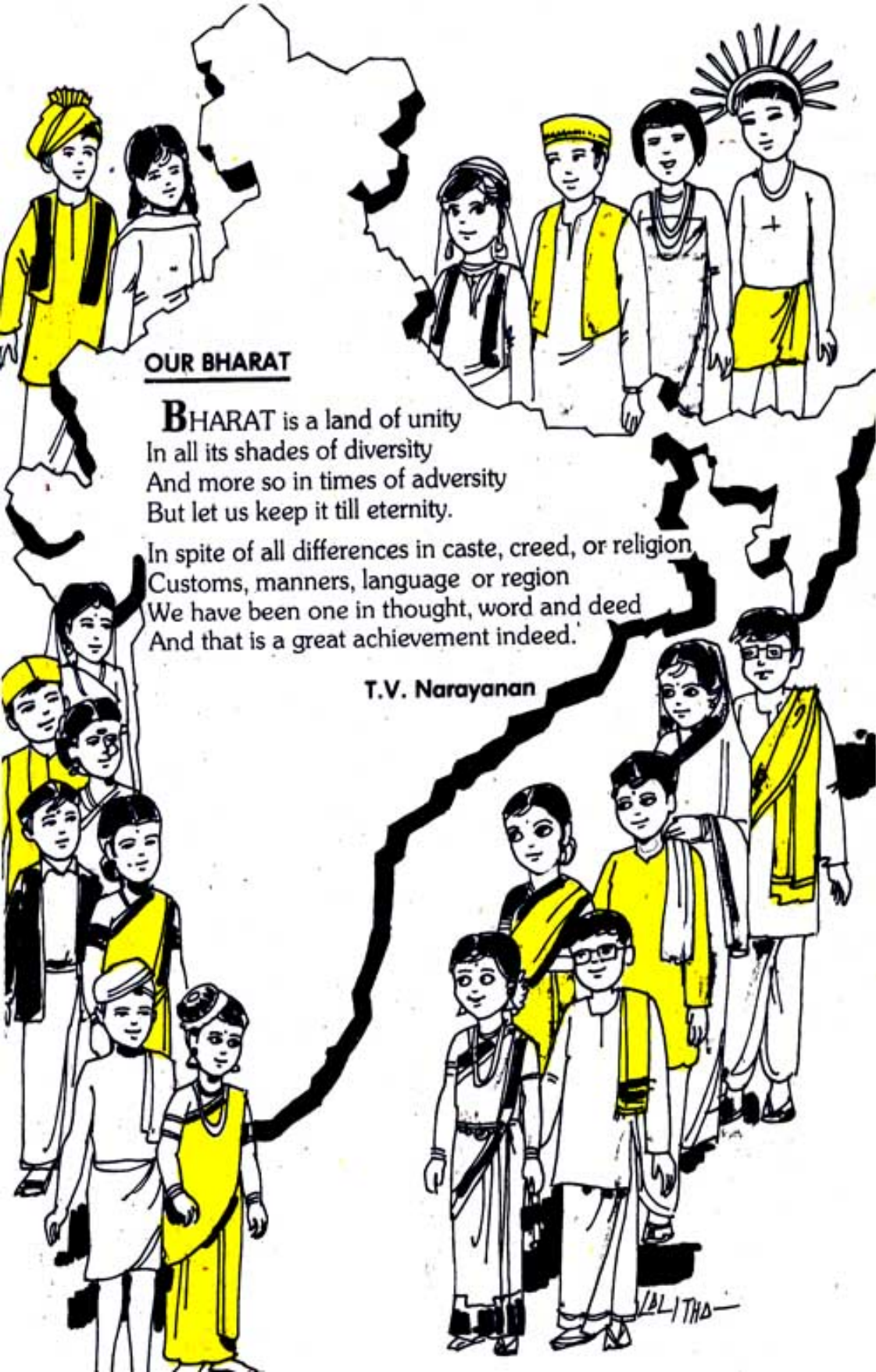
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Cover photograph : Yoga



OUR BHARAT

BHARAT is a land of unity
In all its shades of diversity
And more so in times of adversity
But let us keep it till eternity.

In spite of all differences in caste, creed, or religion
Customs, manners, language or region
We have been one in thought, word and deed
And that is a great achievement indeed.

T.V. Narayanan

ALITHA

The LETTER BOX



Dear Editor,

Every day I have to pass through a lane occupied by milk-men to reach my bus-stop. I often see a cow with her calf, tied to a particular lamp-post. She gets angry if she is disturbed, or if anybody tries to go near her calf.

One day, as I was passing through this lane as usual, a lorry came from the opposite street. It could not pass without disturbing 'Gomatha' and her new-born calf.

When the driver sounded his horn, the cow was able to move to one side, but the calf was not, because its rope was too short to allow it to move.

A boy who was watching this, immediately ran across and pushed the calf close to the cow. I thought that the cow would harm the boy, but it continued to calmly lick its calf. It even gave the boy a fond glance as if to say 'Thank You'.

My mother says that this is a classic example of a mother's love.....

R. Padmalochini, aged 10
Ida Scudder School,
Vellore.

Dear Editor,

In the present day, a super machine

called the computer is doing many of the jobs that were done by men, faster. Because of this, computers are becoming more widely used, and the result is — increasing unemployment.

Children who can afford computers at home use them to help them in their home-work. This makes them lazy.

I think that the amount of work that the computer is put to should be limited. Only then will there be equal development in all fields.

R. Ganesh Kumar, aged 13
M.C.C. School,
Shahabad, Karnataka.

Computers have generated thousands of jobs. There will be advantages and disadvantages in every new development.

— Ed.

Dear Editor,

The results of the tenth and the twelfth

Dear Editor,

One of the silent dangers threatening our country, is the destruction of forests. Not only does the cutting of trees deprive the landscape of its beauty and dignity, but it also causes great imbalances in climate. The cycles of seasons are disturbed, rivers change their courses, and there are unforeseen floods and droughts.

Trees are givers of oxygen — this function of theirs is very important to the human race.

We must make people conscious of the harm done to the surface of the earth — for plant life plays an important



standard examinations have been announced.

A shocking news followed the results — many students were found copying during the examinations and were punished.

Why can't the boys and girls study to pass? Some copy because they are lazy, some because they fear failing in the exams....

And the 'copy-cats' are active in inventing new techniques for copying....

A.S. Krishnan,
Madras.

Dear Editor,

India is the second most populated country in the world. It faces many difficulties — one of them being unemployment. Many people in our country hold degrees, but they do not get jobs. Sometimes, they do work that pays hardly enough to provide themselves and their families with food, shelter, clothing, and

role in sustaining human and animal life.

K. Balaji Krishnamurthy, aged 14
J.S.S. High School,
Bangalore - 560 070.



Dear Editor,

In this age of machines and remote-control operations, man is becoming a victim to many new diseases.

As mechanical labour is used more and more, manual labour is on the decrease, and man has less work to do.

Work is tonic to life. When a man is absorbed in work, he forgets his worries, as his mind is occupied. Without work, man's mind becomes idle, and his body becomes prone to diseases.

Work, whatever it might be, should be done with dedication. It keeps the body and mind active and alive.

Preeti Jain, aged 13
Kendriya Vidyalaya No. 1,
Kalpakkam, Chingleput.

they are unable to pay for their children's education.

The result of all this is that there is further illiteracy and poverty, and many take to stealing, pick-pocketing, etc.

It is very difficult to get seats in schools now-a-days. Parents take a lot of trouble to educate their children, but many dreams are not realised....

We, as future citizens of India should take care of our country....

R. Padmavathi. Std. IX.
Valasaravakkam,
Madras.

Dear Editor,

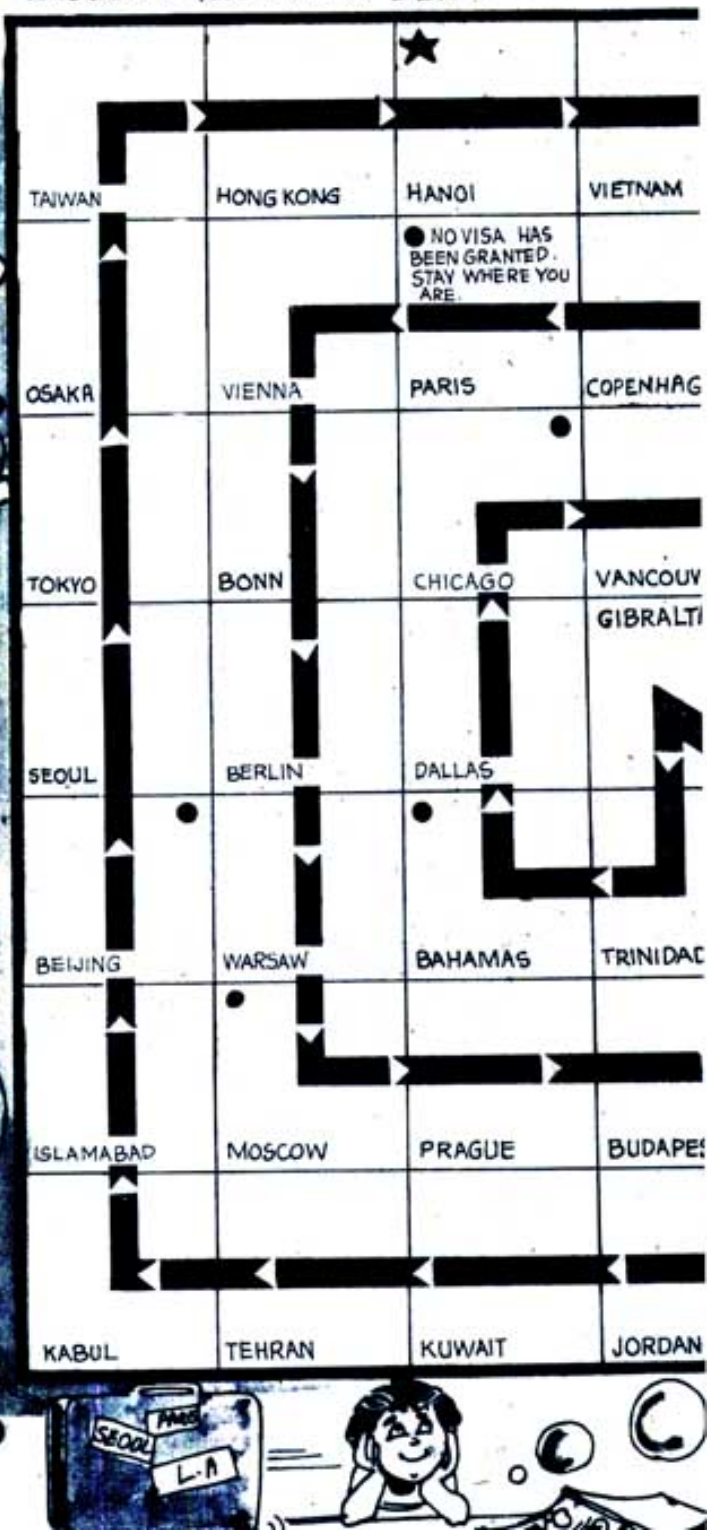
Only the wise man can be truly courageous, for he knows what to fear, and what not to be afraid of.

It is the foolish and ignorant man who is liable to rashness and cowardice, because he does not understand the real relationship between cause and effect. Courage is bravery, tempered by wisdom.

Sripriya K. Iyer, aged 14
St. Anne's Girl's High School,
Bangalore.

AROUND THE WORLD

DESIGNED & ILLUSTRATED BY LALITHA



IN A JIFFY...



Around the world in a jiffy...

GET READY. START FROM INDIA. VISIT ALL THE IMPORTANT CITIES FOLLOW THE ARROWS. COME BACK

- SRI LANKA: THE MILITANTS STOP YOU. MISS A TURN.
- CAIRO: VISIT THE PHARAOH'S TOMBS. MISS ONE TURN. THEN GO TO MONTREAL.
- BAHAMAS: YOU HAVE SOME PROPERTY HERE TO INSPECT. THROW 5 TO MOVE.
- CHICAGO: THE U.S. PRESIDENT INVITES YOU FOR DINNER. GO TO WASHINGTON.
- NEW YORK: SOME THUGS HAVE KIDNAPPED YOU. MISS ONE TURN.
- THE QUEEN WANTS YOU TO ACCOMPANY HER TO ATHENS.
- MOSCOW: IF YOU HAVE THROWN 3 YOU CAN PLAY CHESS WITH MR. GORBACHEV. THEN GO TO ROME.
- BEIJING: YOUR PRESENCE IS REQUIRED HERE, FOR THE ASIAN GAMES. MISS TWO TURNS. GO TO HONG KONG.
- ★ FALLEN ILL. GO BACK. START AGAIN
- SYDNEY: PASSPORT IS LOST. MISS ONE TURN.
- SINGAPORE: DO SOME SHOPPING. THROW THREE TO REACH INDIA

The winner is the person who completes the circuit first and reaches home.



Bon Voyage!

MY COUNTRY, MY PEOPLE

My name is Kala and I live in Madras. Today is the first day of Navaratri. In my house, and many others in Tamil Nadu, it is *Bommai kolu* time,

I get busy drawing *kolam* patterns in front of the arranged steps. Sometimes these *kolams* are so beautiful and intricate that they form a little *kolu* all by



when we hold little doll exhibitions.

We set-up an odd number of shelves as shown in the picture here. We then cover the wooden steps with white cloth and arrange our doll *kolu* on them. It is great fun, with my younger sister and brother getting in my mother's way when she is busy dressing up a doll or making crepe-paper flowers.

themselves. Then we light lamps and offer *chundal* (a snack

made of boiled, seasoned pulses) and *payasam* to the *kolu*. (Most of the dolls are images of various deities in traditional poses.)

Then we have nine days of fun. We visit our neighbours to view their *kolu*. There is healthy competition among us to surpass each other in the arrange-

ments. Sometimes one is specially invited to participate in fancy dress, song and dance. Then my friends and I put up little skits. Once my little brother went dressed as Krishna, only to find ten other Krishnas there!

When you enter a house during Navaratri, you are given *kumkum*, sandal-wood paste and *kalkand* or little sugar crystals. Then when you are leaving after having seen the *kolu*, you are given *kumkum* again, with a little packet containing the traditional betel leaves, arecanut or *pakku* and a little box of *kumkum*. This packet might also contain little surprise like a miniature mirror and comb or other little presents that are pretty and interesting.

(After the festival is over, the dolls are made to lie down and sleep one night, and the *kolu* is taken off, the next day.)

Kolu is an important festival for us because that is when everybody visits each other and old friends have an occasion to meet. Our doors remain open for visitors. I invite all my friends in school, to see our kolu. Some of them for whom this way of celebrating Navaratri is new, are really fascinated by the display, the dolls, the kolam.....

The guests are served *chundal*, *payasam* and sometimes, cool drinks. The scent of incense, sandal-wood paste, jasmine and *payasam* lingers in the air giving a special flavour to the festive atmosphere. This is the festival I enjoy the most.

I have told you so much about *kolu*. Let me now describe some of our other little customs and habits.

During festival days, one usually eats out of a banana leaf. How, you may ask. It is a special skill that is so enjoyable once you have mastered it.

The different dishes have their own set places on the leaf. The rice is served in the centre and you eat it in three courses with *sambar*, *rasam* and *curds*. Food really tastes "yummy" when eaten like that. We sit on little mats, with the banana leaves of food in front of us and attack it with gusto. It makes such a delicious change from those ordinary days when you eat out of a plate.

During festival days, I wear a *pattu pavadai* (a silk skirt and blouse with zari-work on it). My mother gives me long earrings, a chain and anklets to wear, and glass bangles for my wrists. Sometimes, when there is time, I apply *marudani* (or mehendi) on my hands and feet, in a simple design of circles and dots. The fingers are capped with *marudani*. How I love the smell of it!

Do you know how our little ritual of oil-bath is carried out? My mother smears oil and *manjal* (turmeric paste), on our faces and bodies and then gives us a bath one-by-one, washing off the oil in our hair with *shikakai* powder. The oil-bath

OUR
DOORS
REMAIN
OPEN
FOR
VISITORS.



curd-rice for lunch everyday. We call it *thayir-shadam*. There is nothing to beat this cool, "yummy" rice, taken with pickle on a hot summer day.

Most of the houses in our colony have jasmine creepers growing all around them. In summer, they are in full bloom, and every evening we pluck them and give them to mother to weave into garlands. I often try to weave the flowers, but soon give up, because all I do is damage their delicate stems and petals. The smell of jasmine remains in my hair for a long, long time.

days are usually Fridays. What fun then the three of us have, with my poor mother repeatedly saying, "Kala, keep still! Don't shake your head," or "Mahesh!" (That's my younger brother.) "Stop jumping up and down. You are splashing water all over me!" At the end of the bath, the three of us are shining clean, and my mother, all wet and bedraggled!

So now, I have told you all about myself and how I live. Do tell me about yourself too.

Then my mother changes her sari (she bathes very early in the mornings), and takes us to the puja room and teaches us little prayers to recite. Then we put on our uniforms and are off to school.

Sometimes, the turmeric powder after a bath is not washed off thoroughly, and I am then teased in school about it. But then, come Friday, there are a lot of 'yellow-girls' in class for the naughty ones to tease.

Many of my north Indian friends cannot understand how I love to eat



Kala Iyer.

GRANDPA'S TALES



Grandfather always has some wonderful tales to tell. After dinner, we would sit out in the open; grandfather would sit on his favourite carved easy-chair; and we would sit around him on the ground, listening to his stories. Sometimes, one of his stories would delight us so much, that we would ask him to tell it to us again, and again, and again.....

Here is one of my favourite stories — about a bear and a girl.....

THE BEAR

A bear once lived in a forest. He was handsome, tall and strong, and his wife was beautiful. They had two children. The bear loved them very much. Their house was a cave deep inside the forest, and the bear would go out to hunt every morning. He would bring back meat for his wife to cook, and so they lived happily for many, many years.

One day, the bear's wife died. The bear was grieved, but he was also worried about his children. Who would look after them when he went out to hunt? Days passed,

and at last he came to a decision. He would marry again.

So he went searching for a bride. He left his children in his cave, and telling them to be careful, set out on his mission. For days he searched, but in vain. One day, as he ventured to the edge of the forest, he came upon a village. He saw a beautiful girl drawing water from the river flowing by, and decided that she would be his bride.

But how to go about it? No father and mother would give their daughter in marriage to a bear! Suddenly, an idea struck him.





The next morning, disguising himself as a brahmin, he waited at the same spot for the girl to come. She arrived, filled her pot at the river, and began to walk back into the village. The bear-in-the-guise-of-a-brahmin, followed.

When they reached her house, he waited for her to go in. Her father was sitting on the verandah. The bear approached him. "I am a brahmin from a far-off village," said the bear. "I saw your daughter at the river, and I want to make her my wife."

Her father frowned. But he was a hospitable man.

"Sit down," he said, and called out for refreshments for his guest.

As he talked to the bear-in-the-guise-of-a-brahmin, he was impressed. This young man was indeed intelligent, and well educated. He went in and talked to his wife. She too, liked the bear-brahmin. So they decided that he would marry their daughter. They told the bear-brahmin so. Then having fixed the marriage-date, he said, "I shall come back for my wedding. As you know, I am a widower, and I can't neglect my children for too long."

The day of the wedding arrived. The bear was back in disguise as he went into the village. It was a grand marriage, and the bear

left with his wife for his abode. They walked (in those days, most journeys were made on foot), and soon reached the forest. The bride was becoming tired.

"How far do we have to walk?" she asked her husband.

"We have almost reached," said the bear.

They were now deep inside the forest, and the girl was becoming frightened. An hour passed.

"Is it far now?" she asked again.

"No, no," replied the bear, "We are almost there."

Another hour passed.

"How much further do we have to go?" asked the girl again.

"We have reached, my dear," said the bear, and led her into the

cave.

The girl suddenly realised who her husband was. She was now very, very frightened, but did not show it. The bear called his two cubs and told them,

"This is your new mother."

The cubs were delighted. They hugged the girl and welcomed her. Days passed, and the girl cooked for the bear, and looked after his cubs. But she was still uneasy, for she feared of him.

One day, she told the bear, "I am missing my parents. I want to go and see them. Will you take me home?"

The bear agreed, but he asked





her to wait for a few days. But the girl was determined to escape, and she hit upon a plan.

The next day, when the bear came home for his evening meal as usual, she told him to wait, as she was going to make *dosas*, and the dough was not quite ready. The bear waited.

"Is it ready?" he asked.

"No, not yet," she replied.

Time passed.

"Is it ready?" he asked again.

"No, not yet," she replied.

"I am going out," said the bear, "I shall eat when I return."

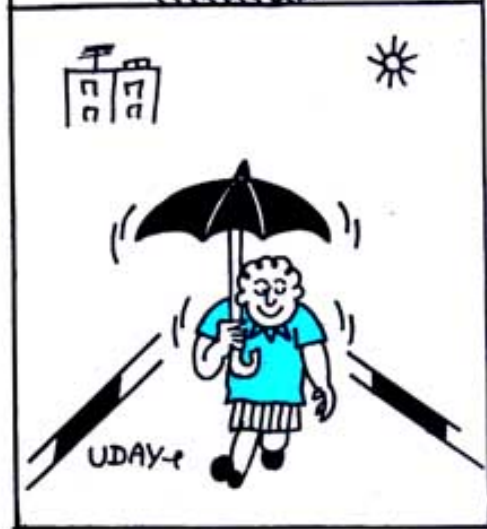
When the bear returned home, he heard the hissing sound of the *dosas* on the pan. Licking his lips, he waited for his meal.

"I am home," he shouted. There was no reply.

The bear waited for some more time.

"Where are the *dosas*?" he shouted. Still, no reply. Impatient and angry, the bear marched into the kitchen.

A shock awaited him. The clever girl had hung a small pot of ghee above the pan on the fire. She had made a tiny hole in the bottom



of the pot so that drops of the ghee fell on the pan at regular intervals, creating the hissing sound. The little cubs were fast asleep. The girl was nowhere to be seen, and the angry bear knew that she would now be at her parents' house. So donning his disguise, he again entered the village.

Meanwhile, the girl's parents had been told of the bear's deception.

"He will come in search of me," said the girl. "Hide me!" The parents locked the girl up in a room and hid the key. The angry bear soon reached the house, and asked for his wife.

"She has gone for a bath," said her father. "Why don't you have your food and take some rest?"

The hungry and tired bear agreed.

After the meal, the bear was asked to sit outside under the cool shade of the trees, and have his betel-leaves, wrapped around betel-nuts. The wily parents of the girl had spread a mat over the mouth of a well, and they invited the unsuspecting bear to sit on it. He stepped on the mat, and was soon drowned.

"But what about the bear cubs?" asked the girl's parents.

"Don't worry," said the girl, "They are sufficiently grown up to look after themselves."

SANDHYA RAMAN

Kashi was once ruled by a king who had no heir. When he asked his minister what should be done about the kingdom after his death, the wise minister thought for a while. Then he offered a solution which the king liked.

A few months later, the king died.

The Wise KING



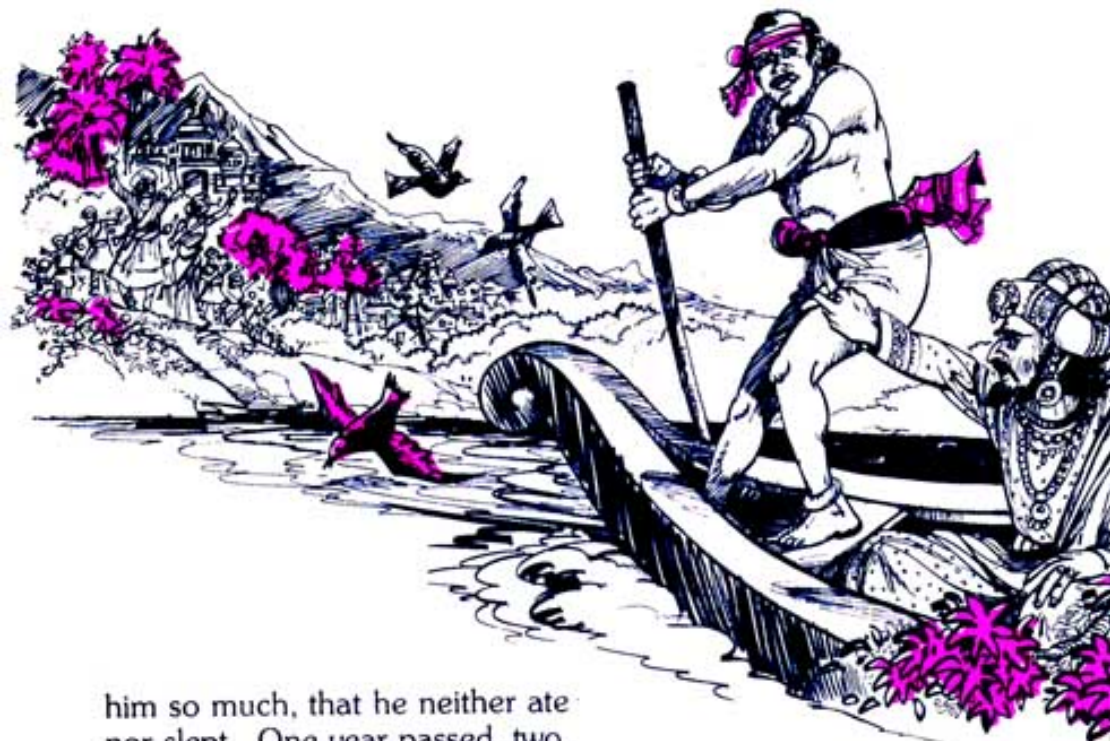
The soldiers took the king to the banks of the Ganges, where a boatman was waiting to ferry him across. He was abandoned in the jungles where wild animals made a meal of him.

Then the second person who came forward to rule became king. But the fate that awaited him worried

The minister announced that whoever wanted to rule the kingdom could become king. But only for five years. At the end of that period, he would be taken to the other side of the Ganges, and be left in the dense jungles there. The next person could then have his turn.

The first person who came forward had been poor all his life. So, as soon as he saw all the food in the palace, he began to eat. He ate all day long, till it was time to sleep. All that the new king did the next day too, was eat. In this way, one year passed, then two, and soon, five years were up.





him so much, that he neither ate nor slept. One year passed, two, three..... and soon five years were over. Now it was time for this king too, to be abandoned in the jungle. While he was being ferried across the Ganges, the worried king jumped into its waters, and was drowned.

The third man to become king was not only clever, but also wise. He neither ate too much, nor worried all day and night. He was always cheerful and smiling, and cared for his subjects. So the people loved this new king and were happy with him. Five years passed quickly.

This king too, was ferried across the river to his fate. But he remained as cheerful and happy as ever. The boatman was surprised.

"Do you know that you are to be abandoned in a jungle on the other side?" he asked.

"Yes," replied the king.

"There are wild animals there that will eat you up," said the

boatman.

"I know that too," replied the king.

The boatman gave up and decided that this king was mad.

Soon they neared the other bank. The boatman was surprised to see that instead of a jungle, there were houses, palaces and gardens.

The king smiled and told him, "I sent workers to cut down the forest. The wild animals soon went away to another forest. Then I built a palace and created a whole kingdom on this side of the Ganges. Look, my new subjects wait to welcome me."

The boatman left the wise king in his new kingdom and returned to Kashi. The king soon had a visitor. It was the minister.

"You will rule both kingdoms."

C. Venkatraman, aged 13

FIND THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS

Vijay's history teacher asked him to find the names of the Freedom Fighters that are hidden in this grid. He did it in five minutes. Can you?

A	M	L	C	P	N	Y	Q	S	O	H	T
C	Z	A	I	T	A	V	Y	H	R	O	S
Y	P	P	H	A	N	U	S	G	B	O	Y
M	F	A	L	N	A	D	H	N	A	R	S
L	Y	R	N	T	S	I	O	I	U	D	D
O	C	D	A	Y	A	A	C	S	S	A	G
I	N	N	G	A	H	N	K	T	Z	L	Y
H	T	A	A	T	E	I	T	A	G	E	M
D	E	H	R	O	B	N	I	G	S	T	A
N	N	C	I	P	P	I	P	A	Y	A	T
A	T	N	S	E	U	J	U	H	Y	P	R
G	F	I	N	L	S	O	S	B	H	R	U
S	E	P	I	M	T	R	U	O	S	A	R
O	Y	I	O	Y	H	A	L	G	A	D	H
Y	L	B	X	Z	S	S	T	T	Y	R	E
L	R	U	H	E	N	A	A	O	L	A	N
R	A	N	I	J	H	A	N	S	I	S	I

Compiled by Ravi G., aged 14

Solution on page 80

Whose photograph is this? You may wonder. A childhood snap of a prominent personality? No, my dear friend, it is the photograph of my friend-cum-teacher, Dhan Raj Subba, who shared my loneliness and taught me how to speak Nepali.

Dr. Subba, as I used to call him lovingly, lives in Gangtok town, the capital of Sikkim State, which is situated at an altitude of over 5,000 ft., and where I was posted for five and a half years.

When I took a room in a house at Gangtok, Subba was my first visitor — his slanting eyes turning round with curiosity. He helped me a lot in picking up spoken Nepali, the language widely used in Sikkim. From me, he picked up



My Nepali Guru

Hindi. Now and then, he would ask me the Tamil equivalent for some words. He would try to pronounce the Tamil words, but would always end up with a fit of giggles.

Subbas, who are also known as Limboos, are a sub-sect of the Nepali people. He belongs to a remote hamlet in North Sikkim. His mother died when he was little. When his father married another woman, he was sent away to work as a household servant. Working in my landlord's house, he had almost forgotten how to

speak his mother-tongue, Limboo, though he could understand it.

Dhan Raj enjoyed some of our South Indian dishes. His dog was named 'Tashi', which means 'Good' in Tibetan.

Initially just a curious onlooker, he soon became my close friend and teacher during my stay in Gangtok.

I cherish his innocent smile and still remember the Nepali he taught me.

S. Balakrishnan.

The Continental **DRIFT**



Fig. 1

TWO HUNDRED MILLION YEARS AGO, ALL THE CONTINENTS WERE JOINED TOGETHER IN PANGAEA. THE TETHYS SEA IN THE EAST, GRADUALLY BECAME TODAY'S MUCH SMALLER MEDITERRANEAN SEA.

Several hundred million years ago, the land on the surface of the earth was a single mass. This single earth-mass is referred to as Pangaea. (Fig. 1.)

About 200-180 million years ago, Pangaea separated slowly into different pieces that began to move away from each other. They formed the different continents as they are seen today.

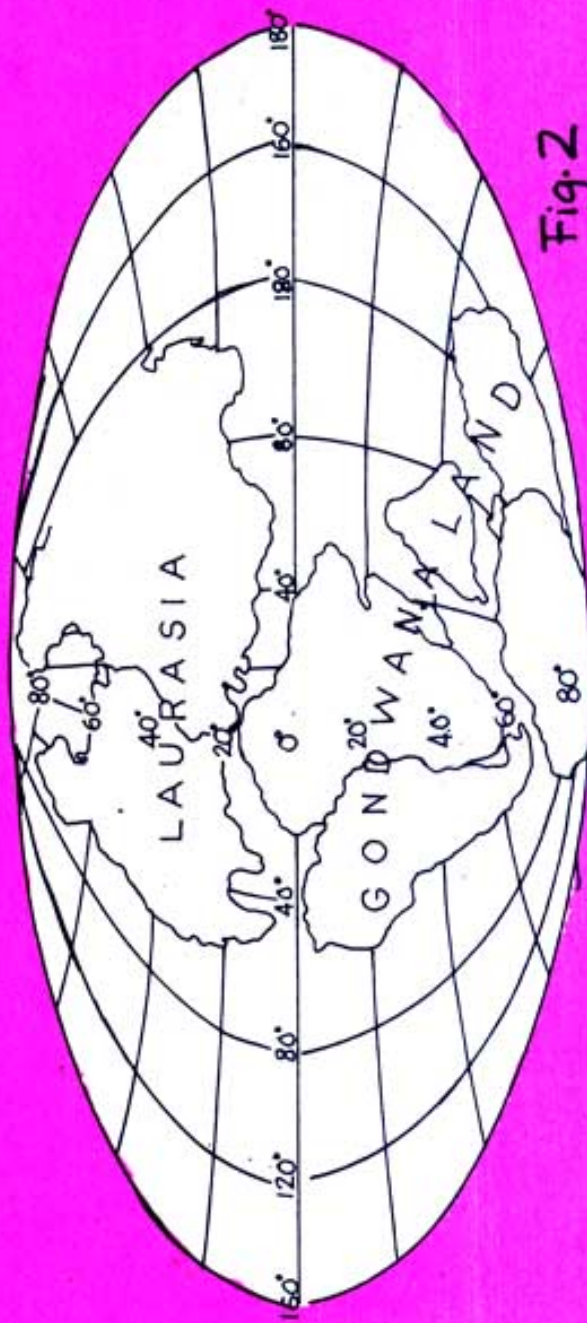


Fig. 2

PANGAEA, SPLIT INTO TWO LANDMASSSES ABOUT 180 MILLION YEARS AGO. SEVENTY MILLION YEARS LATER, THE SOUTHERN ATLANTIC AND INDIAN OCEAN WIDENED AND SPLIT GONDWANALAND APART.



Fig. 3

THE WORLD AS IT IS TODAY.

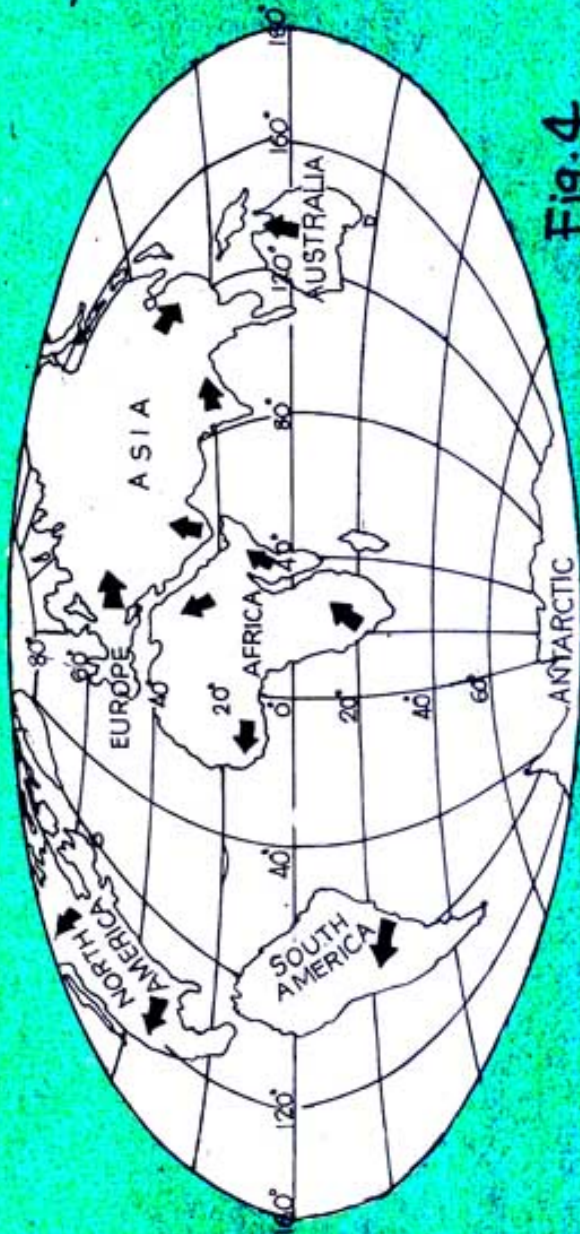


Fig. 4

IF THE CONTINENTS CONTINUE TO MOVE
IN THEIR PRESENT DIRECTIONS, THE
ATLANTIC WILL WIDEN, A RIFT WILL
OPEN UP IN EASTERN AFRICA, AND
AUSTRALIA WILL MOVE NORTHWARDS.

The fact that the earth had moved was not noticed until a few centuries ago, when in 1620, Francis Bacon, an English philosopher noted that if South America and the West coast of Africa were brought together, their sides would fit exactly like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. In 1858, a French scientist, Antonio Snider said that the continental drift explained the fact that similar types of fossil plants existed in both European and North American coal deposits. This would mean that once, long ago, both Europe and America were a part of one, single land mass.

A German, Alfred Wegener, in 1915, tried to explain the continental drift. Through his theories,

he stated that since several similar properties existed in land masses that are now very far away from each other, at some time or the other, they would have been one.

The Pangaea first split into two continents – Gondwanaland that contained South America, Africa, Antarctica and India, and Laurasia that contained North America, Europe and Asia without India. (Fig. 2.)

Then North America broke away from Eurasia, and India moved northwards to join with the huge land-mass of Asia.

As India slowly joined with Asia, the land between the two moving pieces of earth began to rise in folds, forming mountains. These

were the Himalayas.

Australia too, left Antarctica, and moved north-wards to the position it occupies now.

The continents are believed to have drifted at the rate of just a few centimetres a year. We can imagine how long it has taken for the continents to have reached the positions they are in today! (Fig. 3.)

Why the continents drift.....

It has been discovered that the earth's outer layer called the *Lithosphere* rests on a layer of molten material called the *Athenosphere*. Forces from the constantly moving ocean floors push the continents that rest on the *Athenosphere*, and make them drift.



THE SORROW OF HUNGER

I came across her
She was full of hunger

I felt so poor for
The difficulties she bore.

I gave away alms
To fill her palms.

At that instant I saw the infant smile
I jumped in joy for nearly a mile!

V. Prem Shanker, aged 14.

Dear Prem Shanker,
We do not have your address.
Please send it to us.

— Editor



MYSELF

Karthik is my name,
Studying is my game
I am a perfect individual
Challenging myself to every duel
My personality is good enough
Except that I sometimes get into a huff
I try to better my character
To become a doctor.

I want to be famous
Like my competitor does.
I don't know much about myself
That is all I know
Because I am not myself!

Karthik Krishnan Mahalingam, aged 12.



ELECTION — '89

Once I went to an election.
Our work was anybody's selection,
There were bills,
To write our wills.

There were many votes for D.M.K.,
Much fewer for A.I.A.D.M.K.,
It was the end of the selection,
D.M.K. won the election.

S. Ramkumar, aged 12.

THE HAUNTED HOUSE A THRILLING ADVENTURE



Once there was a house in Ghost City. The cats in Meowland* believed that it was haunted. Vibish, the beautiful female cat said, "What nonsense! Come on Abish, let's solve this dumb mystery."

"Boo! I am scared to go alone," cried Abish. "Let's get Meey and Keey of the dustbin to accompany us." The two kittens, were their closest friends. They agreed to come. They went to the market, bought a fur brush, 4 frogs to eat, and some milk for their journey and Abish went to the railway station and got four tickets to Punupur.*

The next day they met, with their bag and baggage, at the railway station, and when the train to Punupur came, they got into it.

They reached Punupur that evening, and did some shopping there. "We will catch a taxi to Ghost City," said Meey. "Okay," the others said. Keey went to catch a taxi.

Soon they were on their way to Ghost City. On the way, they had to stop at Meow-puram. Vibish gave birth to two kittens! They were named Pepunastics and Monchu-

* Meowland — catland or land of cats.

* Punupur — a town near Ghost City.

nastics.

Along with the kittens, Meey, Keey, Abish and Vibish visited the Prince Poonai Memorial and the Meow-puram library. Then they ate half their frogs and Pepu and Monchu drank Vibish's milk. Then they proceeded to Ghost City. The kittens had now opened their eyes.

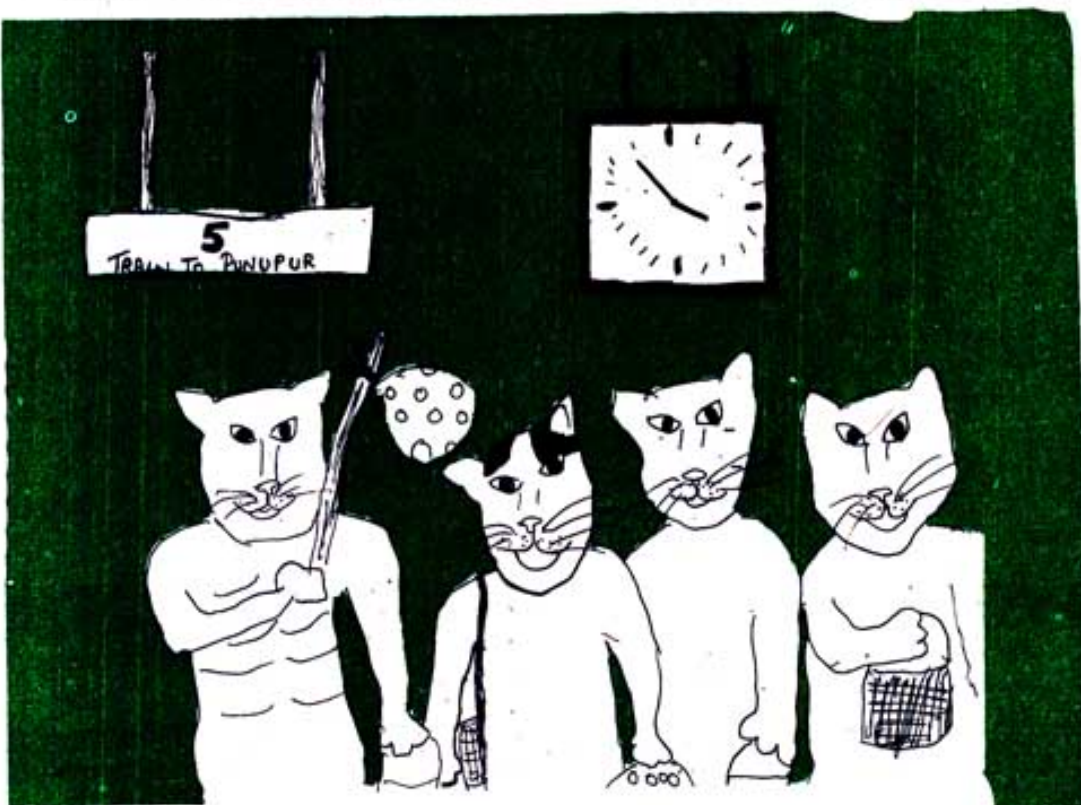
They reached Ghost City and went to the haunted house.

At night, a white figure went past the pillar where Abish hid. The Ghost had come! Abish pounced on the figure. Suddenly, a white blanket fell and there stood a black cat.

"I am Bully!" it roared. It hit Abish. The two babies rushed forward. "Let's do karate," said Pepu. They tried Karate. Bully

only laughed. He kicked Pepu and Monchu and they landed in the bazar. Bully tied up Abish, Vibish, Meey and Keey.

Suddenly, Pepu and Monchu came back from the bazar riding horses. The horses hit Bully. Pepu tied Bully up. Monchu freed the other cats. Bully was put in jail. Then the six cats returned to Meow-



land.

The next day, in the newspapers, the people of Meowland read, "Pepu and Monchu — our hero and heroine."

The newspaper said that Bully

acted like a ghost to scare cats off that house, because when he stole milk and was caught, he would run and hide there.

"Bully could not fool us!" said Abish winking.



Shreya Raman, aged 9

DEAD AS A DODO !

The last Dodo bird was killed in 1680 on the island of Madagascar, off the east coast of Africa.

It was a strange looking bird related to the pigeon family. It was hunted for its meat by Portuguese sailors until it became extinct.

Did you know how the word 'Salary' came into being?

In the days gone by, salt was so important to European civilisations that explorers were sent off round the world to find it. Some people were even paid in salt instead of money! That is how 'salary' came to mean payment for a job done.

SCIENCE

for you

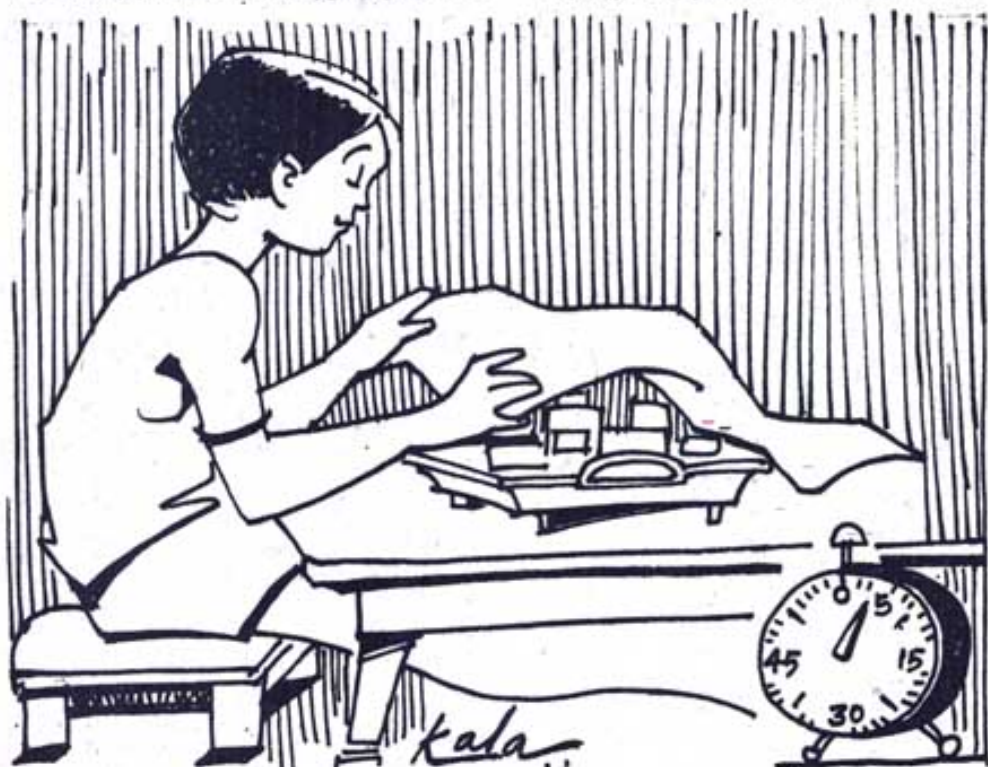
Science is a basic part of our everyday life. If you are to learn of the different ways in which we use science, you should not only be a good observer, but also make an interested and curious learner.

You should begin by sharpening your observation skills. This means that you should be able to see things carefully, and also describe accurately what you have seen. You should use all your senses, of taste, smell, hearing, sight and

feeling — in order to observe.

Here is a small activity that will help test your observations skills...

Get your parents or friend to



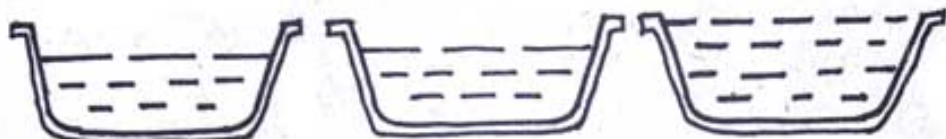
put several objects on a tray, and then cover it with a cloth.

What you have to do....

Uncover the tray, look at all the objects on it for a full minute, and cover it again.

Then sit down and write out the names of the objects you have seen. Give yourself points, so that you will know how much you have improved each time you repeat this test.

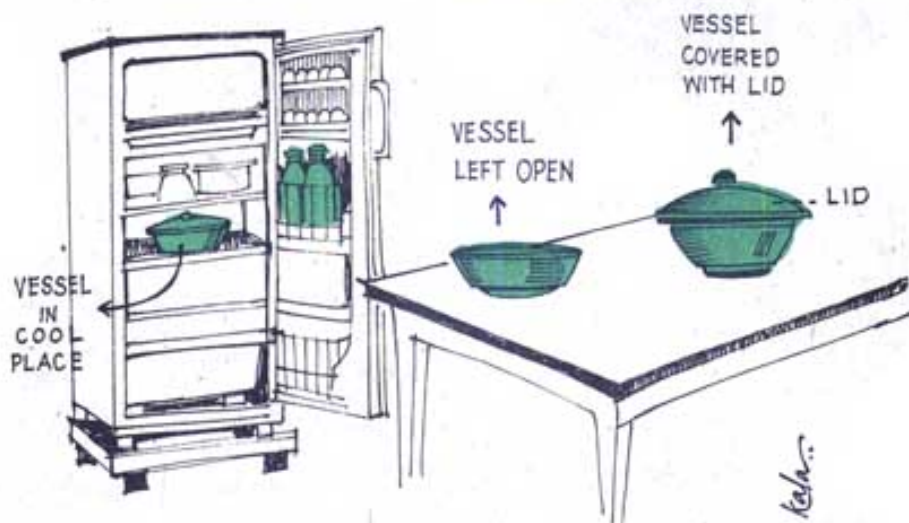
vessel in a cool place, in your house. Keep the other two vessels out in the open, and put a cover on one of them. Look at the vessels after twenty-four hours. Make your observations.



A simple experiment to try at home.....

Q. What are the conditions in which water evaporates fastest?

The water in the vessel that is uncovered in the open has evaporated the fastest. Thus, you can conclude that; 1) the warmer it is, the faster is the rate of evaporation;



You will need three shallow vessels of equal size and shape. Fill all three vessels with equal quantities of water. Keep one and 2) a free movement of air helps evaporation. That is why the covered vessel takes longer to evaporate.

SHADE 'O' GRAPH

Shade the dotted spaces with a pencil.





Four Questions

A woodcutter once came to Akbar.

"O King," he said, "There is no justice in your kingdom. Here I am, cutting wood all day in the hot sun, and all I get is one rupee per day! Your ministers sit idle, yet they are paid so well!"

Akbar smiled and said, "Can you see a bullock cart standing there?"

"Yes," replied the woodcutter.

"Go ask the carter what he carries in his cart," ordered Akbar.

The woodcutter did so.

"He carries rice, O King," he said.

"How many kilos of rice does he carry?" asked Akbar.

"I will go and find out," said the woodcutter. He ran back to the cart and came back to Akbar.

"He carries twenty-five kilos of rice, O King."

"Where does he come from?" asked Akbar.

The woodcutter ran back to the cart and came back to Akbar.

"He comes from Surat."

"Where is he going?" asked Akbar.

The woodcutter ran outside but came back looking dismayed.

"He is gone, O King."

Just then Birbal entered.

"Ah Birbal!" exclaimed Akbar.

"Did you see a cart outside?"

"Yes," said Birbal. "It left a few minutes ago. It's going to Agra with twenty-five kilos of rice, from Surat."

The woodcutter realised what Akbar was trying to tell him, and went away a wiser man.

Padma Iyer, aged 10.

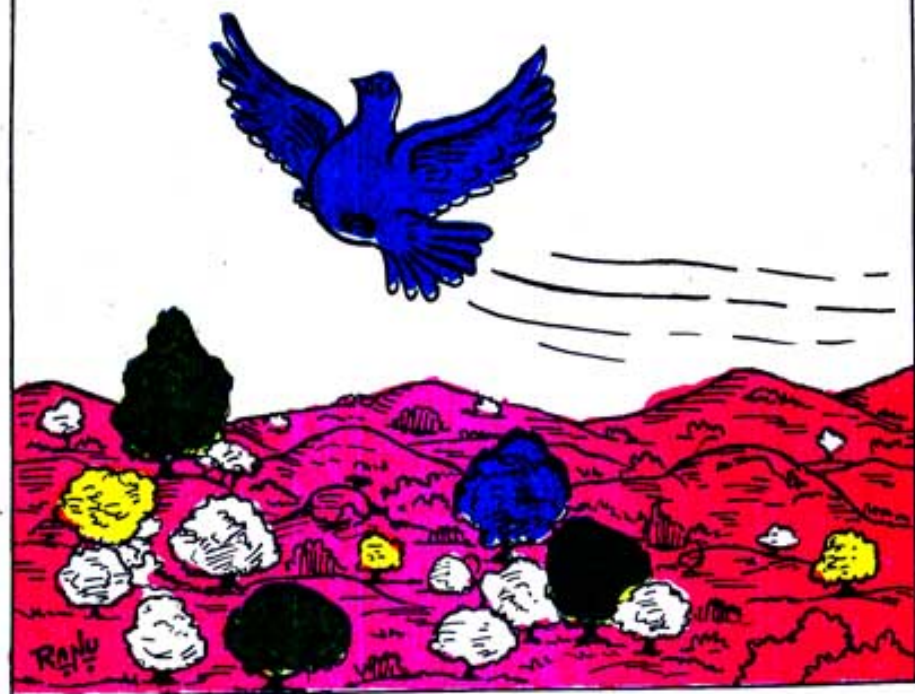


Lamp on the Hill

In the deserted house on the hill
Upon a window sill
A little lamp was burning,
Its pale flame flickering.
On came the wind with all its might
Trying to blow out the light.
But the remarkable little lamp
Went on burning bright
Beaten by the howling rain
In the dark and frosty night.
Take heed my friends
Persevere till the end,
Fight troubles with a will
Like the lamp on the hill.

Priya Anna Thomas, aged 15

Che



THE VAIN PIGEON

In the forests of the Vindhya mountains there lived a vain pigeon. It was beautiful, and its feathers were soft and white.

The pigeon flew freely about the forests, eating the juicy wild fruits from the trees.

One day, it saw a little black mouse without a tail.

"What happened to your tail?" asked the pigeon.

"It got caught in a trap and broke off as I struggled to free myself," replied the mouse.

"You look ugly without it," said the pigeon. "And so very funny! Ha-ha-ha!"

The mouse became angry.

"You will be punished for making

fun of me!" it cried. "Don't you know that it is wrong to jeer at others?"

The vain pigeon flew away. Suddenly it dashed against the trunk of a tall tree and broke both its wings, and fell down, down, down.

As it sat below the tree nursing its injured wings, it remembered the mouse. It felt sorry and ashamed.

C. Akila, aged 12.

Dear Akila,

We do not have your address. Please send it to us.

— Editor.

Did You Know?



..... that the name *centipede* means "hundred-footed", but some centipedes have as few legs as 30, and some have more than 340?

..... that the *centaur* in Greek



mythology was a creature that was part man and part horse?

..... that the first wrist watch was owned by Empress Josephine, wife of Napoleon I of France? She had a watch made in the form of a bracelet.

..... that the word 'cereal' comes from the name of the Roman goddess *Ceres*? She was the goddess who looked after the growth of all food plants.

..... that the 'catbird' got its name because of the catcalls it makes occasionally? It also sings musically.

..... that the Great Wall of China is the longest wall ever built? It is 1,500 miles long and was built mostly in the 3rd century A.D.

..... that the word *circus* in Latin means 'circle' or 'ring'? The ancient Romans used a circular stadium for their chariot races. The most famous of these stadia, was the *Circus Maximus* of Rome.

..... that the first modern circus was founded in London by Philip Astley about the year 1770? His



show consisted of horses, acrobats, musicians and a clown.

..... that early Greeks, Romans and Aztecs had trained runners to carry messages over long distances?



THE SEA

Oh! Look at the Sea!
Crashing sounds and rumbling waves
Sometimes churning, sometimes calm
Blowing winds both cool and warm
Good for fishing, good for fun
The sea is loved by everyone.

Manas V.K., aged 12.



A miser once lost a purse containing one hundred silver coins. He looked all over his house but could not find it. So he announced that whoever found it would receive a reward of ten of those coins.

The next day, a farmer came to see him. He had found the purse. The miser grabbed it and counted the silver coins one by one. When he finished, he heaved a sigh of relief. All the one hundred silver coins were there. Not even one was missing. But when the farmer asked for his reward, the greedy, dishonest miser refused to give him anything.

"My purse contained one hundred and ten silver coins. Now there are only one hundred. You have stolen ten coins. So I refuse to give you any reward," he cried out, pretending to be angry.

The poor farmer was truly angry. He took the miser to a judge.

The judge asked the miser for the purse. It was bulging with the hundred silver coins. The judge tried to put ten more silver coins into it, but the purse would not take even one.

So he said to the miser, "Since this purse can hold only one hundred silver coins and no more, it cannot be the one you lost." The miser realised that he had been caught.

The judge handed the purse with the hundred silver coins to the farmer, and sent the greedy miser away empty-handed.

M. Madhumitho, aged 10

Dear Madhumitho,

We do not have your address. Please send it to us.

— Editor.

Fun-page

P +  = ?

T +  = ?

C +  = ?

B +  = ?

Idea by
SURESH
KUMAR
AGE-10

 + flower = ?

 + board = ?

time +  = ?

 +  = ?

 +  = ?

Devendra
Kumar

Answers -
SUN-FLOWER
CUP-BOARD
TIME-TABLE
RAIN-BOW
HOUSE-BOAT

LALITHA

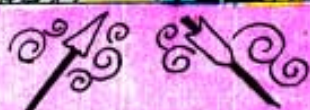
The city of Vartaman was ruled by King Virabhujan. He had many wives.

Gunavari, our kingdom has no heir....

The Queen Gunavari...

Why don't you consult the court physician?

Guard! Call the physician!



THE GOLDEN ARROWS

Story: Anandhi Pictures: Vinu

The physician came....

I will make a magic potion out of leaves. Drink it.

Meanwhile, the King and Gunavari were at the temple....

Lord, grant me a son.

When they returned to the palace...

What have you done? The chief queen should have been given the potion first!

The physician was frightened.



Forgive me, O King.
The Lord will grant you
the son you desire.

He prepared the potion once again....



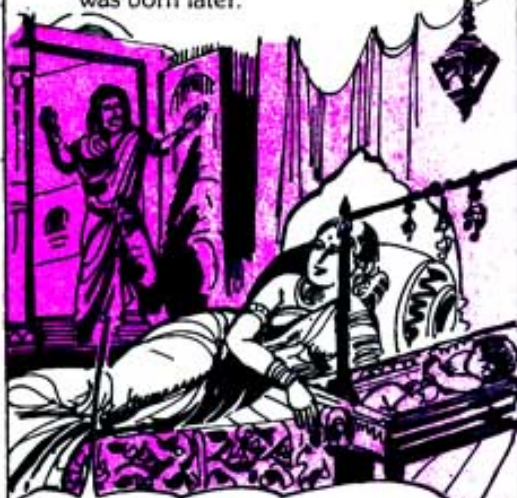
Pray to the Lord while you drink it.

The younger queens
soon gave birth...

My children!



Since the chief queen was the
last to drink the potion, her child
was born later.



Gunavari! The whole town will
rejoice since the heir
is born.

Gunavari was worried....



O King! Look at the
child's shoulders.

The king saw....



He has horns on his shoulders! It is the Lord's gift! He shall be named Shringabuja!

Years passed.
The princes grew...



Shringabuja was the cleverest....

May you excell in studies as well as warfare. Nobody can equal you in archery!



The other princes became jealous....

Shringabuja gets all the attention....

Father too, loves him best!



The queen Hamsalekha....



Mother! We are older to Shringabuja, yet he is to be crowned king!

Hamsalekha was shocked.



It cannot be!
You are the eldest.
You should be king.

Nirvasa, my son! We cannot allow this to happen. We shall turn the king against Gunavari and Shringabuja.



How, mother?

Later, Hamsalekha spoke to the king.....



What has happened?

O King! I am afraid for you.



How can I tell you this?
The chief queen plots with Sorasidutta
to kill you and crown her son king.

The king was disturbed.
He could not sleep....



Is it true?
How can I find out?

Hamsalekha acted fast.
She called her maid...

Tell Gunavari that
her son is in danger.

Gunavar was frightened
at the maid's words.

I will consult the
trusted Sorasidutta.

She called Sorasidutta
to her apartments.

Shringabuja's
life is in danger.
Guard him
carefully.

Don't worry....

As Sorasidutta left,
the king arrived.

The king questioned his other queens.

Sorasidutta in the inner apartments?
Is what Hamsalekha said true?
There must be some plot afoot!

Ratna! Is it true, what I hear?

Ratna told him
what she had heard.

She does wrong!
I had already
decided to crown
Shringabuja.

Gunavari plots with
Sorasidutta to crown
her son.



The king is convinced.

Shringabuja is but a youth.
Gunavari wants to use him,
so that she can rule the
kingdom. I am afraid
for you!

Imprison Gunavari
in her apartments!



The king.....

Shringabuja
is hurt.

The court astrologer predicts
danger to your mother's
life. I am only guarding
her against it.



Father! Why have you imprisoned
mother? Even I am not allowed
to see her.



Where is Sorasidutta?



Shringabuja, I shall tell you.

The king hides the fact that Sorasidutta too, is in prison.



Sorasidutta has murdered a brahmin. He has gone on a pilgrimage to atone for it.

One day, as the princes prepared for a hunt.....

We shall take the magic arrows that father reveres.



Don't you fear his wrath when he finds out?

They called Shringabuja for the hunt...



We will blame Shringabuja. Father will punish him.



Look!

What a big bird!

A hermit in the forest.....

That is not a bird.
It is the asura,
Agnikesan.

Prince Nirvasabuja.....

Shringabuja!
You are an
expert in
archery! Kill the
asura with these
arrows!

Unaware that they were
special arrows, Shringa-
buja pierced the
asura twice.

The asura escaped....

Oh!
The arrows!

They are
magic arrows!

What shall we tell our father!

Shringabuja.....

I shall follow the asura
and bring them back.

My aim is true!

Father will be furious
if you don't!

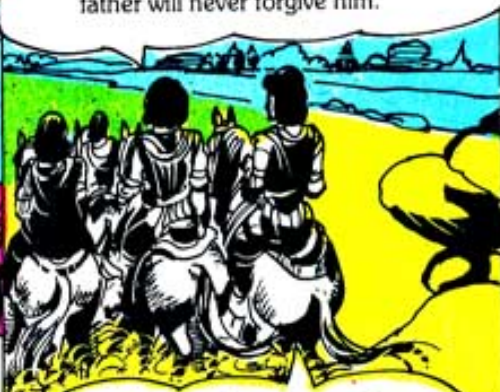
Shringabuja followed the asura.



He cannot escape
the asura's clutches!

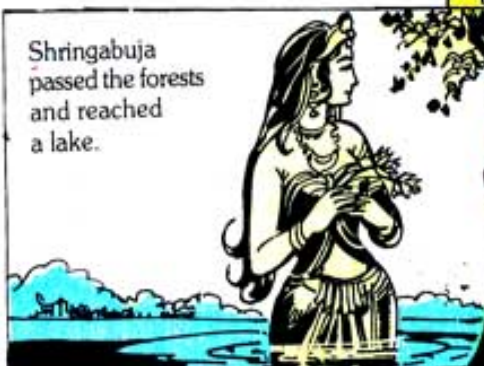
The four then returned
to the capital.

If he returns without the arrows,
father will never forgive him.



Shringabuja is ruined!

Shringabuja
passed the forests
and reached
a lake.

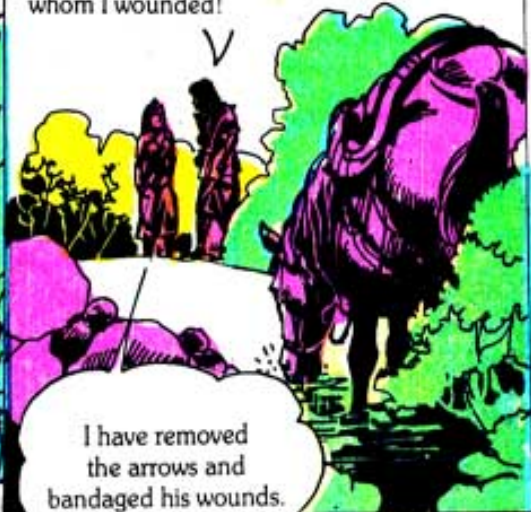


I am the daughter of Agnikesan
who is king of Kolahalam.
My name is Roopasikai.



Who are you, O maid,
who wanders alone
in the forest?

This is the same asura
whom I wounded!



I have removed
the arrows and
bandaged his wounds.

Shringabuja told her of his mission.



There are few who are brave enough to wound my father. I wish to marry you.

Roopasikai took him to her father.



He is the one who wounded you. He has come to take the golden arrows back.



He will make a tasty meal. I shall eat him!

Father! I wish to marry him. If he dies, then I too will die!



The shocked Agnikesan decided to put Shringabuja to test. He made his hundred daughters stand in a row...

Find Roopasikai and garland her.



All of them look alike!

One girl had a lotus
in her hand



This is my bride!

Agnikesan.....



That was an easy test! Here are a hundred
sacks of til. Plough the land and sow the
seeds before the night is over.

Twilight...
Shringabuja is worried.

Don't worry. I will
take care of it.



As soon as it was night,
Roopasikai called her friends...



The elephants are ploughing the land
with their tusks!

Just before morning.....



The birds of the forest are sowing
the til.

Sunrise.... Agnikesan is surprised.

I have to test your skills further. Gather the sowed til in the sacks before tomorrow morning.



That night, a worried Shringabuja....



Don't worry. My friends will help us again.

Numerous ants put the til in the sacks....



All I have to do, is tie the mouths of the sacks! How clever these ants are!

In the morning, Agnikesan....



You are very clever. I want my brother Dhoopadutta to be present at your wedding. Go, fetch him from his home.

That evening.....

This must be a plot, too!



Nobody can escape Dhoopadutta. I will tell you how to escape his clutches.

After walking for ten days, Shringabuja crossed a mountain.

Dhoopadutta is asleep. I will take his dagger as proof that I have seen him.

He woke Dhoopadutta....

Dhoopadutta tried to swallow Shringabuja.

Agnikesan has asked me to fetch you.

I shall throw the magic sand that Roopasikai gave me.

The sand grew into a mountain and stopped Dhoopadutta.

But he crossed the mountain of sand....

Before Dhoopadutta can cross over, I shall escape.....

I shall throw the magic water that Roopasikai gave me.

The water
became a river....

Dhoopadutta cannot
cross the river!



But Dhoopadutta did, and was soon
upon him.



I will throw these thorns
that Roopasikai gave me.

Huge thorn bushes grew....



This should stop Dhoopadutta!



But Dhoopadutta cut across the
thorns with an axe.

Shringabuja was tired...



I shall use these kandhaka* tablets
that Roopasikai gave me.

* Sulphur.

Dhoopadutta could not fight the flames. He returned home.



Shringabuja reached the palace of Agnikesan.



I called your brother to our wedding. He was unable to come. He presented me this dagger.

Agnikesan was surprised....

Nobody has escaped Dhoopadutta so far. You are indeed brave! You shall wed my daughter!



The marriage was solemnised.



Shringabuja! I shall teach you my magic mantras.

Shringabuja grew strong with the power of the mantras.



Roopasikai! We should go back to our kingdom. I am worried for my mother.



We shall take the golden arrows.



My father will not allow us to go. We should leave secretly.

They stole out of Agnikesan's palace, but they were spotted.



I will drag them back and punish them!

Roopasikal's sisters
soothed their father.



Let her go,
father! We are
with you.

Roopasikai will soon be
queen of Vartaman.
You will be proud
of her.

Virabhujan was happy to
see Shringabuja and his
bride.

I have
brought
back your
arrows.



You shall rule after me!

The king realised his mistake and
released Gunavari, the chief queen....

Father! What about
Sorasidutta?



He too
is free!

THINGS TO MAKE AND DO



FIG.(1)

bright colours. Cut out the mouth with a pair of scissors.

Take the waste paper, cut them out into squares of equal size. Crumple them into paper balls. Each player can have five paper

FEED THE CLOWN GAME

Materials needed :

An empty shoe-box or cardboard box.
Crayons
Scissors
Waste Paper

Method :

On the box, draw the head of a clown with an open mouth as in fig. (1). Then colour the clown with



FIG(2)

balls. Now place the box on a chair as in fig. (2). Mark a line five feet away from the clown.

Each player takes a turn at tossing the paper ball into the clown's

mouth. A player gets a point every time he successfully feeds the clown.

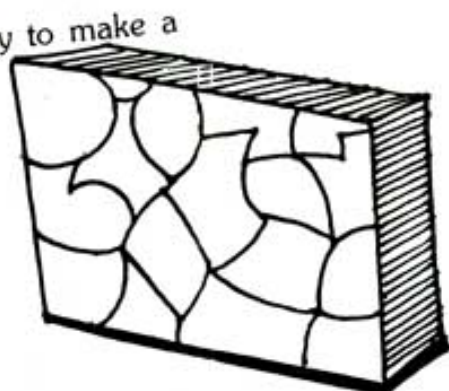
The first player to score 25 points is the winner.

Make a Jigsaw Puzzle

Here is an easy way to make a jigsaw puzzle.

Materials Needed :

Scissors
Old magazines
Cardboard
Adhesive paste.



Method :

Cut out the pictures you like from the old magazines. Paste them on the cardboard. With a pencil,

draw lines across the picture (fig. 1). Cut the picture along the lines. Your jigsaw puzzle is now ready.

A Hanging Doll

Materials Needed :

Some thick cardboard
Cotton
 $\frac{1}{4}$ metre white or cream coloured cloth
Needle and thread
Scissors
Long strips of black cloth
Beads, buttons and bits of decorations to sew on.

into a round shape. This is the head of the doll. The size depends on how big you want it to be.

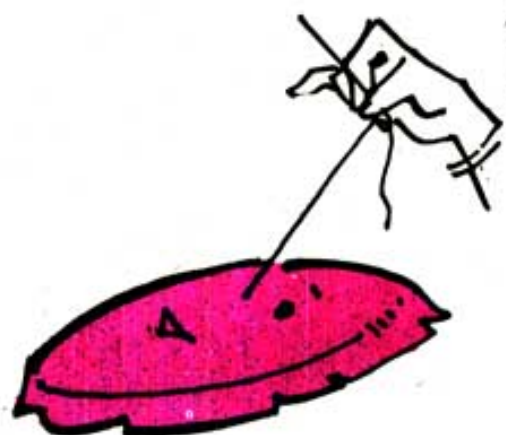


Fig(1)

Method :

Take the cardboard and cut it

Spread the cotton flat on the round piece of cardboard. Fig. (1).



Fig(2)

Cover this with the white cloth. Bring the ends together at the back and stitch them up.

Stitch on buttons for eyes, and paint the nose, eye-lashes and eye-brows.

Or you can cut out pieces of cloth for the nose and mouth and paste them on.

Stitch on the long strips of black

cloth to the top of the head. Then make two plaits, tie them with ribbons and allow them to hang on either side of the head. Stitch on a strip of ribbon at the top and hang your doll.



Fig (3)

Harpreet Kaur, aged 14.

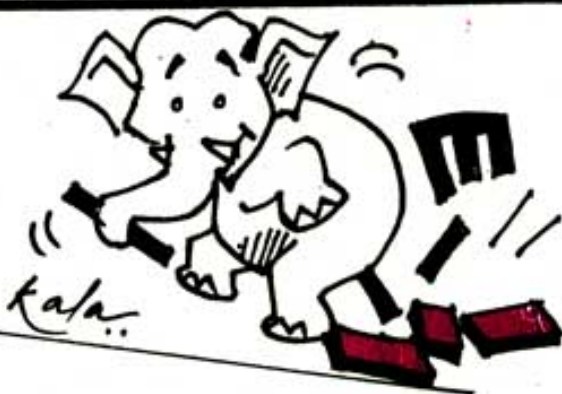
Dear Harpreet,

We do not have your address. Please send it to us.

— Editor.

Q: What is the time when an elephant sits on a chair?

A: Time to get a new chair!



Q: What is a sleeping bull called?

A: A bull-dozer, of course!





A tiger once lived in a jungle. He was becoming old, and could not hunt any more. So he often went hungry.

One day, as he walked past a stream in the jungle, he found a lovely gold bangle. It was beautifully carved and studded with red stones. He picked it up in one paw, sat down, held it up and kept gazing at it.

Just then a lone traveller came by. He had no weapon to defend himself from bandits or wild animals.

When he was about to cross the stream, he saw the tiger sitting on the other bank. A chill of fear passed through him. He turned and tried to walk away as silently as possible.

But the tiger had seen him.

"O Man!" he shouted. "Wait a moment!"

The frightened man tried to hurry away.

"Stop!" cried the tiger. "I will

not harm you. Do you want this gold bangle?"

The minute he heard 'gold', the man turned around.

"O Man," said the tiger, "I am old and have no teeth. I no longer eat flesh. I don't need gold either. Take this bangle."

The man stood for a while, unable to make up his mind.

"Had I really wanted to eat you," the tiger went on, observing the man's hesitation, "I would have pounced upon you and finished you even before you saw me."

This convinced the man. He thought that the tiger must be telling the truth after all. If he had really want to eat him up, he would have done so long ago.

"Cross over and take this bangle," said the tiger. The foolish man held his dhoti above his ankles and proceeded to cross the stream. As soon as he reached the other bank, the tiger pounced, and that was the end of the man.

COLOUR and KEEP



UDAY-1

Fuzzles



SCRAMBLER!

Below are the names of ten towns. Re-arrange the letters to find their names.

1. MDRIAUA
2. MDSRAA
3. MTURHAA
4. PDEHMASURJ
5. NAATP

6. ONKCLUW
7. MNOERLGAA
8. TCCLLIUA
9. CLTTUCAAA
10. YMOSER

Compiled by 'Geetha'.

Re-arrange these jumbled letters to find the names of five fresh water fish.

1. PCAR
2. WMINNO

3. GGUDNOE
4. BHUC
5. CHERP

Find the animals hidden in these words and jumbled letters. The clues will help you.

1. TAR — A rodent, small and destructive.
2. BARE — Mammal that loves honey.
3. HEAR — Looks like a rabbit.
4. GUN — A kind of Antelope.
5. TANG — A tiny flying insect.
6. MACEL — Found in deserts.
7. NIOL — The king of animals.
8. LOW — A night bird.
9. RAZEB — A striped animal.
10. GITER — A member of the cat family.

Compiled by G. Indu

Dear Indu,
We do not have your address. Please send it to us.
— Editor.



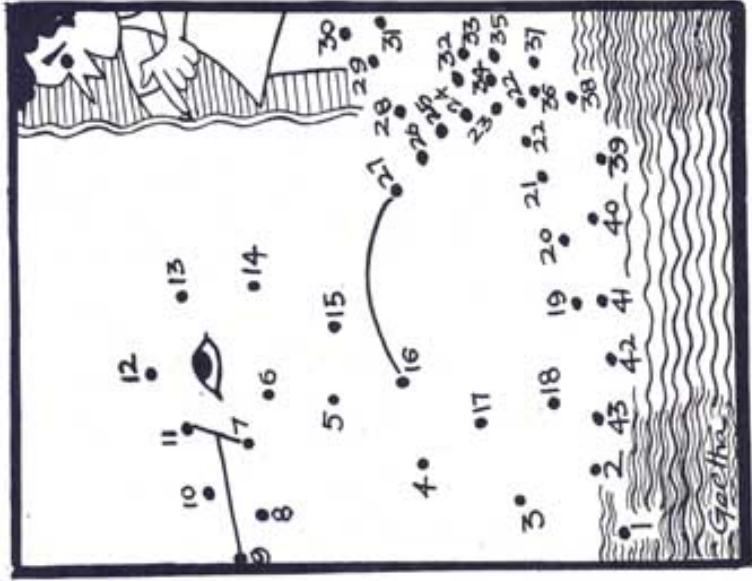
Ramu's mother has made delicious halwa with cashew-nuts on it. Ramu wants to cut it into seven pieces for himself and his guests.

But he wants to make sure that each piece has one cashew-nut.

With a pencil, see if you can draw three lines that will divide Ramu's halwa into seven pieces, so that each piece has a cashew-nut.

Answers
on page 80

Join the dots and complete the picture.



Devised by Geetha.



THE CLEVER FARMER

Ramu was a farmer. He had an acre of land in which he grew maize. One evening, after a big fight with his neighbour, Ramu found himself in prison.

This was the time when Ramu should have been ploughing his land to sow a new crop of maize. He knew that he could not ask his neighbours to help him, because they would be busy cultivating their own lands. His wife, too, was not strong enough to plough the land on her own. So he wondered how he was to sow the maize.

An idea struck him. He wrote out a postcard addressed to his wife. "Don't dig our land. I have

hidden all your jewellery in the fields."

Ramu's wife could not read. So she asked a passing villager to read it out to her.

"He asks you not to worry about him," lied the villager.

That night, the villager, along with some of his friends, dug up the farmer's land.

The next day, the farmer's wife saw the dug up fields and sent word to her husband, "The fields have been dug up during the night. What shall I do?"

The farmer wrote back. "Sow the maize."

M. Karthikeyan, aged 14

Save and Reap



Kriti had a very rich and generous uncle in America. Her tenth birthday was approaching. She was waiting anxiously for it, thinking of all the presents that she would get.

Guess what her uncle sent her? Five hundred rupees! Kriti was indeed surprised and excited. What was more, along with the money was a letter to her parents saying that she could spend the money as she liked. He also said that she should write back to him describing how she had spent the amount.

Now, her parents were rather strict and disapproved of this. But they finally decided to allow her to spend it as her uncle wished.

Kriti was overjoyed. She thought of all the things that she could buy with it.

Her first thought was to buy lots of ice-cream. But then she thought that five hundred rupees of ice-cream would be a bit too much.

Then she thought of buying a beautiful frock. But, she already had too many. Besides her mother

would anyway buy her one for her birthday.

She thought of buying some jewels. But she would not be allowed to wear them to school, and she dared not wear them to play. So that idea too, was out! Oh! What should she do with the money?

While she was struggling thus, another uncle who lived near by, visited her. He heard Kriti's problem and said, "Don't you worry. I'll tell you what to do with it. Put it into a bank. The bank will use it and pay you for doing so. This, added to your money, will become over a

thousand rupees in a few years' time."

Kriti took her Bangalore uncle's advice. Her parents were pleased.

Later, Kriti wrote to her uncle in America and told him how she had deposited the money in the bank. She was a bit worried that he would be angry because she had not spent it.

But, of course, he was not. He was so pleased that Kriti had learnt to save that he sent her another five hundred rupees!

APARNA M. RAO

FACT FILE



A recent study has shown, that children of school going age constitute 40% of the T. V. audience in India. Look at the statistics!

Place	Children	Adults
Delhi	72.4%	25.5%
Calcutta	67.9%	29%
Bombay	64.1%	28.8%
Madras	57.2%	37.4%

— R. Dillip Kumar, aged 15

The Beginnings of Bubble Gum

Frank Flear invented bubble-gum nearly a hundred years ago. But it was too sticky. When it burst in the chewer's face, it stuck so hard that it had to be scrubbed with hot water to remove it.

Frank's brother experimented with 'Chicle,' the dried sap of a Mexican jungle tree.

One day, he said, "Look Frank, these chiclets are coming out right!"

The right gum to make bubble gum had been found!





DHARMARAJA HUMBLED

There was a king named Dharmaraja. He was very proud of himself because he thought that there was no other king who gave alms and helped the needy as he did. Once Lord Krishna came to visit him, and decided to teach him a lesson. So he invited Dharmaraja to accompany him to *Pataala*, the netherworld.

As they strolled through *Pataala*, they reached the gates of King Bali's palace. It was guarded by a gate-keeper.

"So you have to come to ask the help of the great King Bali," said

the gate-keeper.

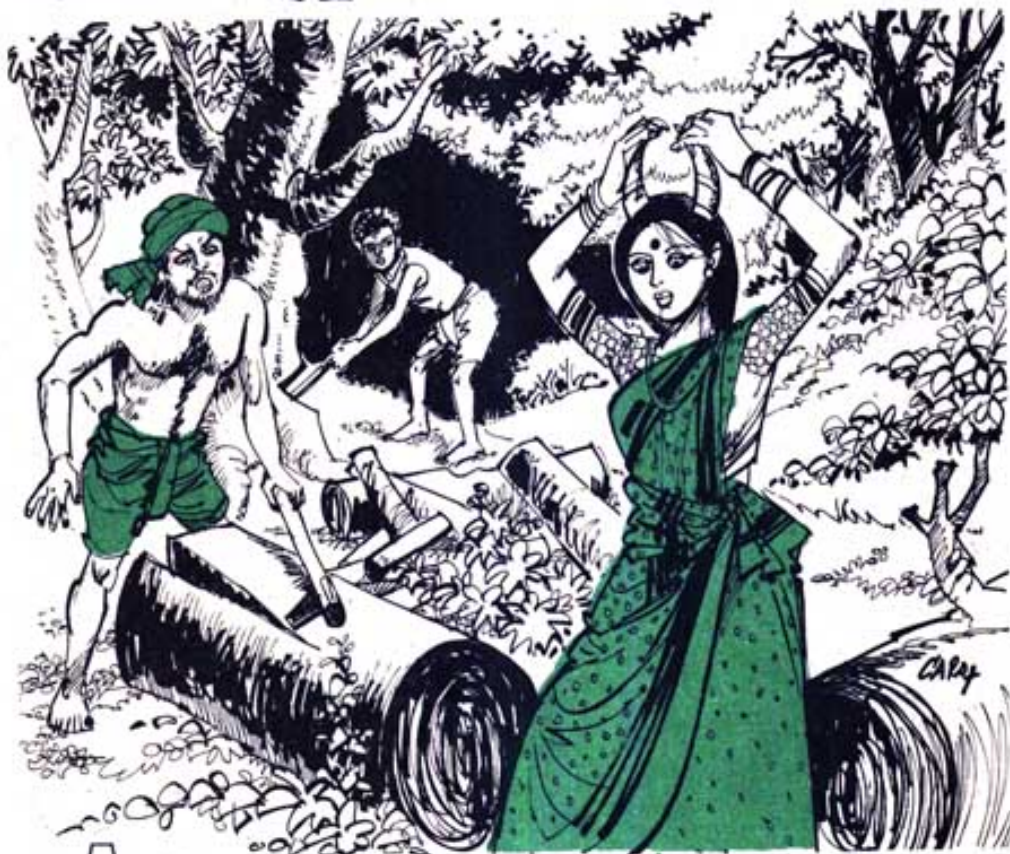
"Why should I ask King Bali for help?" asked Krishna pretending to be angry. "Do you know who this great king is? He is Dharmaraja, who gives alms to thousands of needy people in his kingdom."

"Are there so many poor and needy people in Dharmaraja's kingdom?" asked the gate-keeper. "I have been King Bali's gatekeeper for many years, and I have not seen a single beggar."

Dharmaraja at once realised the folly of his charity.

Jayesh P. Sule, aged 13.

THE THREE WISHES



A woodcutter once lived in a forest with his wife and son. They were very poor, and could not afford more than one square meal a day.

The woodcutter would go to the forest early in the morning, cut wood into logs, bundle them up, and carry them home in the evening. The next day, his wife would sell the logs in the market and return home with grain and pulses to make their evening meal.

The spirit of the forest saw the woodcutter and his wife toil every

day, and felt sorry for them. One day, as the woodcutter set out as usual with his axe on his shoulder, the spirit called out to him,

"O woodcutter! I am the spirit of the forest and I see you toiling here everyday. Bring your wife and son here. I will grant you a boon each."

The woodcutter hurried back home and told his wife and son. They did not believe him, but they returned to the spot along with him anyway.

"So you have come!" said the

voice of the spirit. "I grant each of you a boon."

The woodcutter's wife and son were first amazed, then overjoyed. His wife was the first to speak, "I shall make the first wish, O spirit," said she. "Make me the most beautiful woman in the world."

The woodcutter was angry. But the spirit said, "Your wish is granted!" Suddenly, the woodcutter's wife was transformed into a beautiful woman.

Now, the woodcutter became jealous. He thought that his wife would no more work as hard, and instead spend her time admiring

herself before a mirror. So, foolishly, without stopping to think, he said, "Let horns grow on her head!"

The spirit was surprised, but said, "Your wish is granted!"

And in a moment, two horns stood on the wife's head. The son was very upset to see his mother so. He quickly wished.

"Let my mother be as she was before."

"So be it!" said the spirit, and there was silence.

The woodcutter, his wife and son, suddenly realised their foolishness. They had wasted the three wishes!

Dear children,

We receive many contributions from you that do not contain full particulars about yourselves — sometimes you do not give your ages, and in many cases, the addresses are not given.

Some of you send jokes, stories, poems, etc., all written on one single sheet of paper. It becomes very difficult for us to sort out your different contributions.

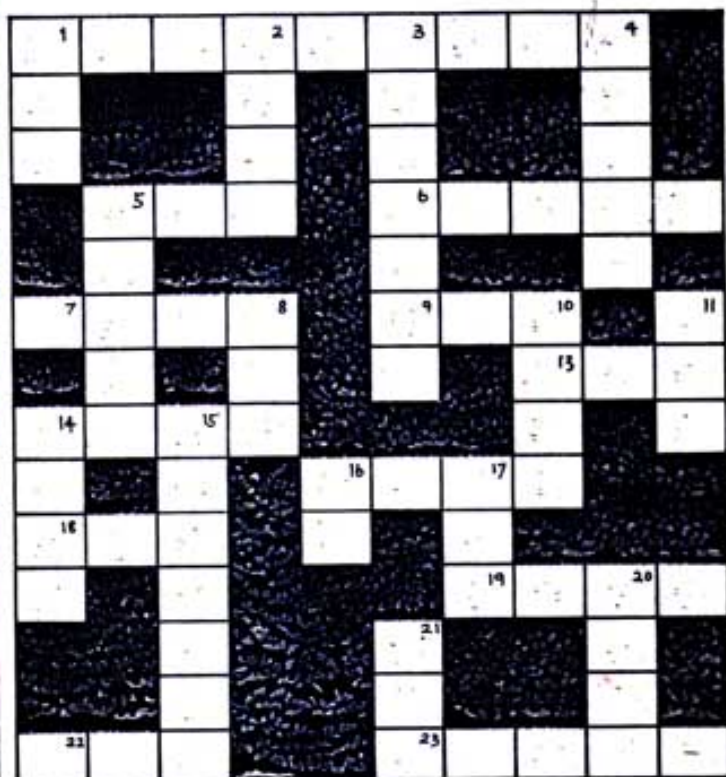
When you send contributions to Gokulam, write the different articles, stories or poems on separate sheets of paper. Every contribution should state clearly your — Name, Age, and Address.

So keep sending in your contributions — we know you enjoy writing them. We love reading them too!

With love,

Aunty Leela
Aunty Leela.

CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1. Spanish city where the next Olympics is to be held (9)
5. _____ men are equal. (3)
6. Houses are made out of _____ and cement (5)
7. A very powerful wind (4)
9. Shaking your head in approval (3)
13. Frozen water (3)
14. Found both in books and in plants (4)
16. Mirth (4)
18. Old way of saying yes (3)
19. _____ thy neighbour as thyself! (4)
22. A seaside holiday resort in India (3)
23. Gods grant them! (4)

DOWN

1. A flying mammal (3)
2. Not hot (4)
3. Lord Buddha was born her. (7)
4. _____ in Wonderland."
5. Surprise (5)
8. A kind of Fairy (3)
10. Used in board games (4)
11. Plant drink (3)
14. A big chunk of bread (4)
15. Uncle Sam! (7)
16. Get set, ready _____! (2)
17. A snake like fish (3)
20. He tried in _____ to succeed (4)
21. Spider product (3)

Compiled by Krishnaveni
Rangarathan.

Answers on page 80

Sunanda was in a fix. She had borrowed Mukesh's rubber, and now it was lost! And there was Mukesh at the school gates, bending with the weight of the bag on his shoulders. He looked up and saw her!

"Sunu!" he waved, "Have you done your maths sums?"

Sunanda felt herself shake. What should she tell him?

"Show me your book." Mukesh now stood next to her.

She dug out the maths book from her bag and gave it to Mukesh.

He put his bag on the sand and sat down next to her.

"Hey! This sum is wrong!" he said, and began to explain why it was wrong.

Sunanda wondered when he would ask about his rubber. The whole class knew him to be a

THE COST OF A RUBBER

kanjoos who never lent anything to anybody. But he was Sunanda's best friend and she knew that he loved his pencils, rubbers and other stuff as if they were pets.

"When you divide twenty thousand three...." Mukesh was saying.

"I lost your rubber," said Sunanda.

"What?"

"I am very sorry."





"Buy me a new one," he said.

"I can't," said Sunanda. "I have no money now."

"Buy it next month," he said.

That evening, after tiffin, Sunanda told her mother,

"Mummy, I lost Mukesh's rubber."

"Why did you take his?" asked her mother.

"Mine got over," she said.

So that evening, Mummy took her out to buy her a new rubber. The shop-man showed Sunanda some imported ones. They were simply fantastic.

"Mummy, mummy! Get me those, please."

"How much do they cost?" asked Mummy.

"Fifteen rupees each," said the shopman.

"They are too expensive, Sunanda," said Mummy.

"Everybody has them mummy," begged Sunanda.

"Anita, Ritu, Mala, Vinod, everybody! Please!"

"This rubber will last for a long time," said Mummy. "I'll get it for you, if you promise to keep it carefully."

"I will, I will, mummy," said Sunanda. "Shall we get one for Mukesh too?"

"Yes," said her mother, "But if this happens again, you will have to go without a rubber till you save enough to buy yourself one."

Mummy gave Sunanda a rupee every week to save in her little mud *hundi*. "Yes, mummy," agreed Sunanda.

The next day at school, Sunanda waited excitedly for Mukesh to come. He came with his maths books in his hands as usual.

"Mukesh," said Sunanda, "I have bought you your rubber!"

She triumphantly handed it to him. It was a beautiful, soft, white rubber, and it looked expensive.

"Thanks," said Mukesh, looking at it surprised. "How much did it cost?"

"Fifteen rupees," said Sunanda proudly.

"Here," said Mukesh, putting it back into her hands, "The rubber you lost cost only two rupees."

"But it's for you!" cried Sunanda. "It erases simply great! Keep it!"

"Did your mother buy it?"

"Yes," said Sunanda.

"You lost my rubber," Mukesh told her. "Not your mother."

Anyway, all I wanted was a rubber to erase with. Not this. I cannot take it."

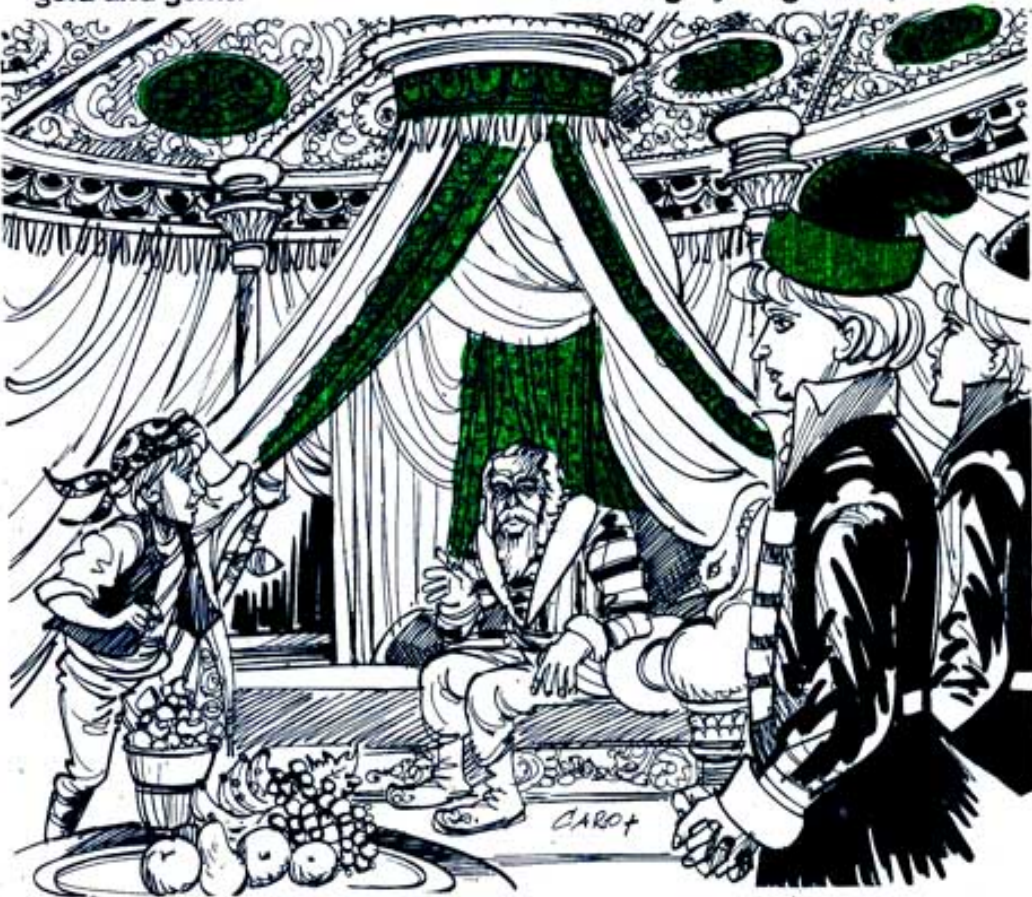
SANDY.

THE MAGIC MIRROR

Once upon a time there was a king who was very rich and famous. He had so much wealth that his treasuries overflowed with gold and gems.

One has only to look into it to become young again. Bring that mirror to me, and I will give you half my kingdom."

The king's youngest son was a



Now this king was growing old. His wealth had made him so vain that he thought he would never grow old. But slowly, as time passed, his hair turned white and his body became frail and bent.

"I don't want to die," decided the king. So he summoned his three sons and told them, "Somewhere on this earth, it is said, is a

simple fellow. His brothers always laughed and jeered at him, and even the king had no regard for him. So when he too was preparing to set out in search of the magic mirror, the king laughed and said, "Why don't you stay here and let your brothers find it?"

"Yes," said his brothers, "It's best that you stay back, you simpleton!"

But the simpleton was adamant. Why should he be left out of this adventure? So the king gave up and agreed.

His two brothers were given all that they needed for their journey — fine horses, provisions and gold. The simpleton was given just an old horse, and little money. But, the simpleton did not mind. He was content with what was given to him.

He set out cheerfully, along with his brothers, riding his old horse. His brothers, on their fast steeds, sped away and left him far behind. But he did not give up; and though night had fallen when he reached the inn where his brothers had halted for the night, he did reach it!

"So here you are, at last!" they

jeered. "How is your old horse?" The simpleton just smiled. He was happy to be with them.

The next morning, his brothers were up early and rode off without him. When he saw them gone, he simply mounted his old horse again, and allowed it to go wherever it wanted. Soon they reached a dense forest and the horse trotted into it. Days passed, and the simpleton and his horse went on and on until they finally reached an old hut.

An old woman who lived in that hut came running out.

"A visitor at last!" she cried. "I have lived for years in this forest, yet I have not seen a traveller brave enough to enter it!"





"I am looking for a magic mirror, grandma," explained the simpleton. "Do you know where I could find it."

"Ride on till you reach my sister's hut, young man," replied the old woman. "She might know something about it."

The simpleton rode on till he reached her sister's house. She, too, was surprised to see him. He told her about his search.

"I have heard about this mirror," said the second old woman. "But I don't know where it is. Ride on to our eldest sister's hut. She is the wisest of the three of us and is sure to know where it is."

The simpleton rode on to the third sister's hut. She too, was surprised to see him; very surprised,

indeed!

"No human dares venture into this forest," she said. "What do you want?"

The simpleton told her.

"I don't know where it is," she said. "But my servants are sure to know. Come inside." The simpleton followed her into the hut and watched her take a carved whistle from a shelf and blow it.

Suddenly, there was a great rustle of trees and leaves and the simpleton was astonished to see all the beasts of the jungle assembled in front of the hut. The old woman asked them about the mirror, but they did not know anything about it. So she returned to the hut, took another carved whistle and blew it.



There was a great flapping sound as all the birds of the forest assembled before the old woman. But they too, did not know anything about the mirror. So the old woman sent them off and said, "There is one servant I have who is the wisest of the lot," and blew another carved whistle.

There was a great rumbling sound as a two-headed hawk swooped down from the sky and settled near the old woman.

"What is it you wish, O Mother of the Forest?" asked the hawk. The old woman told him.

"The magic mirror is hidden in the chamber of a princess, who lives on an island in the middle of the sea. This island is surrounded by such tall jagged rocks that no ship can reach it without being torn to

pieces," said the hawk.

"Take him there on your back," said the old woman, and the hawk obeyed.

They flew for many days and at last, one dark night, reached the island. The hawk plucked out two feathers from his tail and told the simpleton, "The palace is guarded by two fierce bears. Drop these two feathers on them, and they will immediately fall asleep. Then go to the princess' chamber and you will find the mirror under her pillow."

The simpleton did as he was told, found the mirror and was back. They returned to the hut of the eldest sister. She gave the simpleton a small piece of cloth.

"Just wave this cloth and all your wishes will come true," she said. The simpleton thanked her, got on



his old horse and went on to the hut of the second sister. She gave him a pair of scissors.

"If you need clothes, just click these scissors," she said.

He continued on his journey and reached the hut of the youngest sister. She gave him a little bag.

"If you need food, open this bag," she said. "Loaves of bread will roll out of it."

Soon the simpleton reached the inn. He found his brothers there.

"I have found the mirror," he said.

"Show it to us!" they cried.

The simpleton showed it to them. They grabbed it and made for the palace of the king. The simpleton followed them as quickly as he could.

"We found it," they told the king.

"I found it, father!" cried the simpleton.

"He is a liar! We don't need him. Have him put to death, father!" cried the two brothers.

"Take him to the sea-shore, put him in a boat and push him into the sea!" ordered the king.

They did so and returned to the palace, only to find the magic mirror missing. They searched high and low but could not find it.

Meanwhile, the simpleton managed to steer his boat to the safety of an island. It was a deserted island, but the simpleton was not a bit dismayed.

He waved the piece of cloth and cried, "Let there be a town and many people in it!"

No sooner had he said that, than a town arose; but the people had no clothes to wear!

He clicked his magic scissors and clothed the people. This done, he opened his magic bag and fed the people.

The simpleton was made king of the island. One day, a ship landed on the shores, and a young princess with her maid entered the simpleton's palace. She was the same princess from whom he had stolen the magic mirror!

"I have been told that I am to marry the man who stole my magic mirror. And I have been told that you are he," she said.

And the simpleton and his queen ruled this island for many, many years.

A Russian folk-tale.

RIDDLES

Q. Why did the girl-guide feel dizzy?

A. She did too many good turns.

Q. What is the most popular tune in the world?



A. Fortune!

Q. What is the longest month in the year?



A. September! It has nine letters.

Q. Which is the best way to steal a

mat on which an elephant is sitting?



A. Wait for it to walk away.

Q. What is the difference between a fisherman and a lazy student?

A. One baits his hooks and the other hates his books!

Q. What flies high but never goes anywhere?



A. A flag!

Q. What did the big rose say to the little rose?

A. Hiya, Buddy!

Compiled by 'Geetha'.



I WANNA CONCENTRATE

I wanna concentrate no matter what;
Pushing everything out of my mind.
When my books I manage to find
I steady myself and my book
And start studying. One, two, three
I tell myself :

I am gonna concentrate
Whatever be the subject's trait.
But soon my mind starts wandering.
And over silly things, I keep pondering.



Or I feel too lazy.
Thinking studying is so easy
I loaf around my beautiful house,
Watching my neighbour fight with his spouse.
I switch on the television,
With high hopes of
Watching something which is not very bad.
But the faces there turn me mad.
Off goes the switch, bang goes the door
While I march off to study, deciding to try once more!
Somehow or other, I tuck it in my head.
Mind you, it is less easily done than said.
Geography is a terror,
History is no better.
But these terrifying things can
Seem easier if all temptations are banned;
If this is achieved somehow
Then studies become our love!



Carolyn S., aged 14.

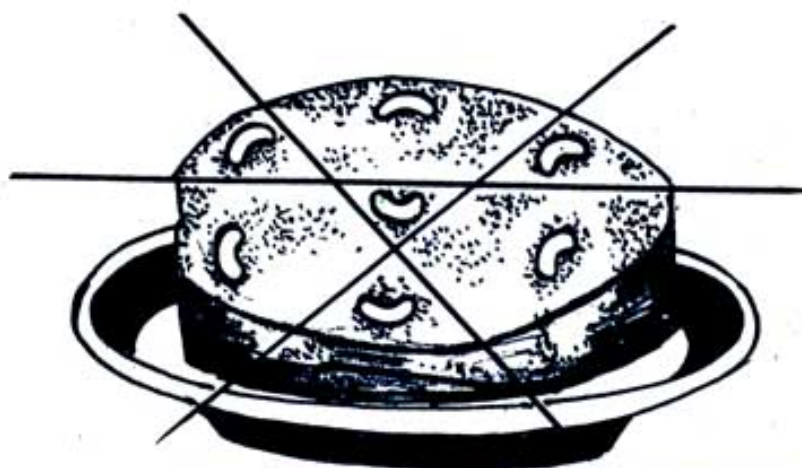


SCRAMBLER!
Answers

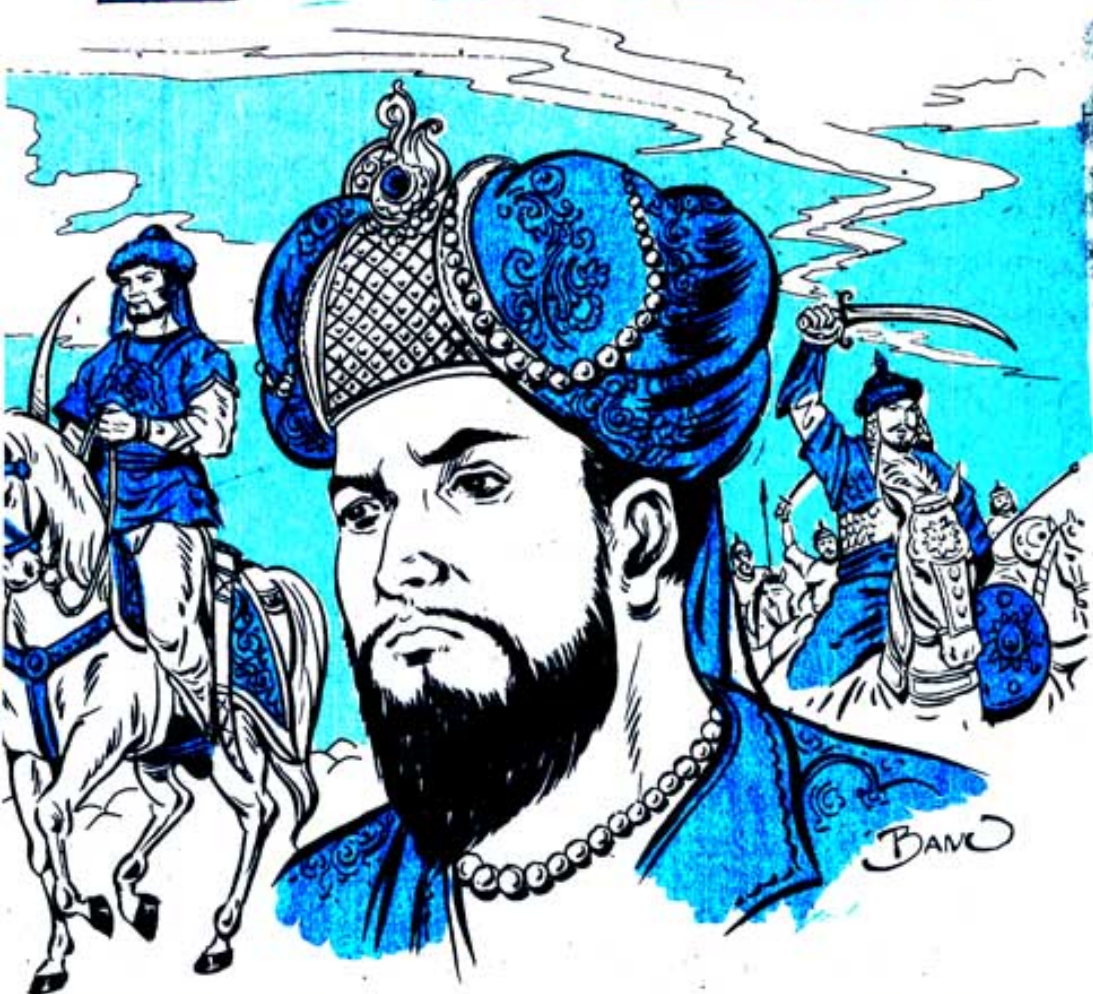
1. Carp
2. Minnow
3. Gudgeon
4. Chub
5. Perch

1. MADURAI
2. MADRAS
3. MATHURA
4. JAMSHEDPUR
5. PATNA
6. LUCKNOW
7. MANGALORE
8. CALICUT
9. CALCUTTA
10. MYSORE

1. RAT
2. BEAR
3. HARE
4. GNU
5. GNAT
6. CAMEL
7. LION
8. OWL
9. ZEBRA
10. TIGER



BABUR



Babur had two famous ancestors — Ghengis Khan and Timur-i-lang, both of whom were warrior leaders. He was the first mughal to establish an empire in India, the empire that dominated the country for nearly three centuries. Here is a play that illustrates both his life and career.....

Characters

Babur : a prince

Ahmed : a boy, and friend of Babur.

Other boys : friends of Babur

Noblemen of the court of

Farghana

Grandmother of Babur

Alam Khan : uncle of Ibrahim Lodi who is Sultan of Delhi

Humayun : son of Babur

Messengers

Soldiers

Guards

great landslide occurred and it slid down into the valley!

Babur : Strange are the ways of fate! My poor father!

Messenger : Now, O Prince, you, his heir are the King of Farghana.

Babur : First, lead me to the scene of disaster.

Messenger : Come with me, Your Majesty.

(Bowing low, he leads Babur off-stage. The other boys too, follow them out.)

Curtain

Scene II

Scene I

(Babur is twelve years old. He is playing in a garden with his friends.)

Babur : *(pointing to the sky)* Look Ahmed, isn't that hawk magnificent?

Ahmed : *(shading his eyes with his hands and looking at the sky).* It is beautiful! I have never seen a hawk fly so well.

Babur : It is a king among birds! Born to rule the sky!

Enter messenger.

Messenger : *(bowing low)* O Prince! The king is now in eternal rest.

Babur : What? My father dead? How did this happen?

Messenger : His Majesty was relaxing with his doves in the dove cote in the palace. Suddenly, a

(Babur is in court. A few nobles are with him. They are looking worried.)

Nobleman 1 : Your uncles have powerful armies.

Babur : I know. Now that my father is dead, they think they can wrest the kingdom from me easily.

Nobleman 2 : Your uncles make ruthless enemies. Our army is too small, and we are not prepared for war, my lord!

Babur : We should think of some way to outwit them.

Noble 1 : What can we do?

Noble 3 : Courage can move mountains and defeat powerful enemies!

Babur : Yes! We shall face them. I shall fight to the last to protect my kingdom.

(Exit Babur followed by nobles.)

Curtain.

Scene III

(A room in the inner apartments. Enter Babur on one side, and his grandmother on the other.)

Babur : Greetings, Grandmother!

Grandmother : God bless you Babur! You have begun to rule

should know of all that happens around you. *(She pauses)* The king of Samarkand is dead. If you want to expand your boundaries, Samarkand can be your first conquest.

Babur : I shall capture Samarkand. I will build an empire to be proud of.

Curtain



Farghana like an experienced king.

Babur : *(smiling)* I am king, grandmother!

Grandmother : So you are! At your age, my child, you have much to learn. Be just and generous. Reward loyal noblemen with land and wealth.

Babur : I will, grandmother!

Grandmother : Never encourage flattery! As a king you

ACT II

Scene I

(Two nobles enter on stage. They look worried and troubled.)

Noble 1 : Ever since our king Babur captured Samarkand, ill-luck seems to have followed us!

Noble 2 : Now Babur himself lies

ill, unable to bear the news.

(They hurriedly exit.)

Noble 1 : Yes, the news that his younger brother has joined his uncle and captured the valley of Farghana. His own brother!

Curtain

Noble 2 : And our new conquest, Samarkand has no grain to feed the people.

Scene II

Noble 1 : Poor Babur lies ill worrying about the fate of his two kingdoms.

(An army camp. Soldiers are assembled here and there, talking to each other, polishing and sharpening their weapons, etc. Babur walks on stage thoughtfully. A nobleman enters from the other side.)

Enter messenger.

Messenger : King Babur has recovered. He wishes to consult you on matters of importance.

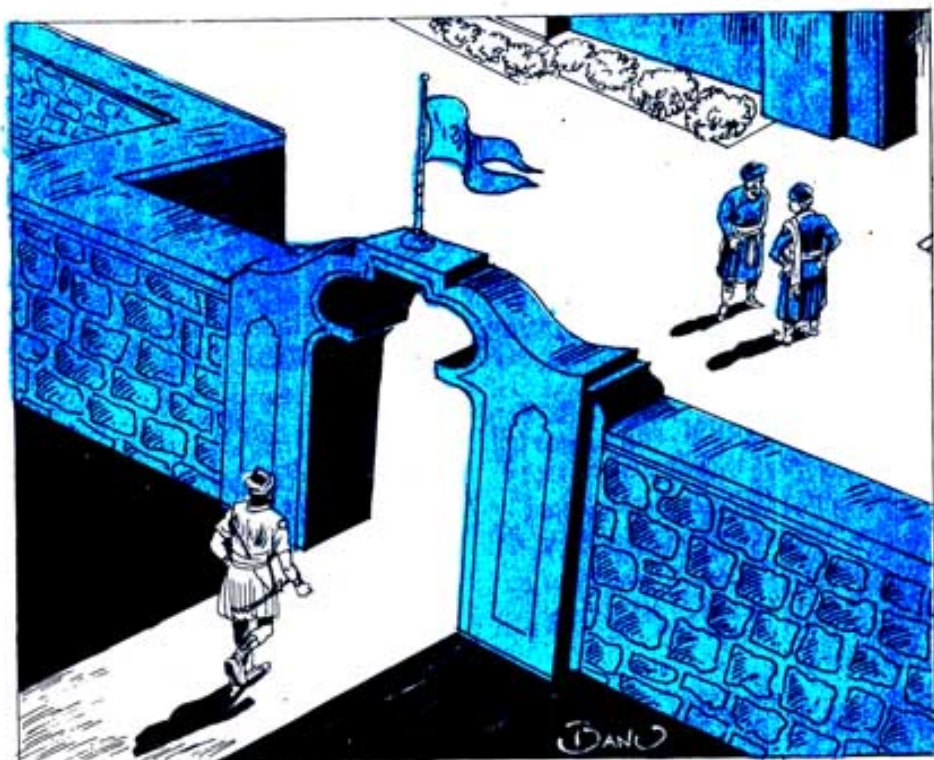
Noble 1 : The king wished to see me?

Exit messenger.

Noble 1 : Allah be praised! Our king is well!

Babur : I wished to talk to you. First it was Farghana, now Samarkand too has gone. Here I am, king of neither Farghana nor Samarkand. Those of whom I

Noble 2 : Come quick! We shall go to him.





Scene III

have asked help, have refused.
What am I to do?

Noble : A tyrant sits on the throne of Kabul. It is said that the people wish you to be their ruler.

Babur : (startled) Kabul? (He thinks for a while, walking to and fro. He stops suddenly.) Yes. We shall take Kabul.

Noble : And you should strengthen your position there.

Babur : Yes, I will. I will govern Kabul and make it secure, before I make any other conquest. Come! We will make plans for our expedition.

(Exit Babur, followed by the noble.)

Curtain

(A palace. Years have passed. Babur is seated on a diwan. Around him are several nobles, some sitting, some standing.)

Babur : Our attempts to gain Samarkand have failed. Powerful enemies surround us.

Noble 1 : What about India, my lord? It seems to be a land of riches and wealth!

Babur : We have gone to India several times. Yet, how are we to conquer it?

(Enter guard.)

Guard : Alam Khan, uncle of Ibrahim Lodi, sultan of Delhi, wishes to see you my lord.

Babur : Send him in.

Scene IV

(Exit guard. Enter Alam Khan. He bows to Babur.)

Alam Khan : Greetings to the ruler of Kabul!

Babur : Welcome, Alam Khan! What brings you here?

Alam Khan : A plan that brings advantages to you and me!

Babur : And what plan is it?

Alam Khan : You have always desired the Punjab.

Babur : Yes.

Alam Khan : Overthrow Ibrahim Lodi and make me sultan of Delhi. Punjab will then be yours.

Babur : *(smiling)* So you aspire to be sultan?

Alam Khan : And you desire the Punjab!

Babur : *(laughs)* Yes! I want the Punjab.

Alam Khan : *(eagerly)* The people dislike Ibrahim Lodi. They will welcome a new sultan.

Babur : I will come to India.

(A battle has just been fought. Soldiers are lying wounded on stage. Enter Babur, wearing armour, followed by soldiers and Humayun.)

Babur : Humayun! Go to Agra and make it ours!

Humayun : Yes, father!

(He bows to Babur and leaves the stage.)

Babur : *(to soldiers)* Ibrahim Lodi has been slain. We shall march on to Delhi and make it ours!

(Exit Babur followed by soldiers. Enter two noblemen.)

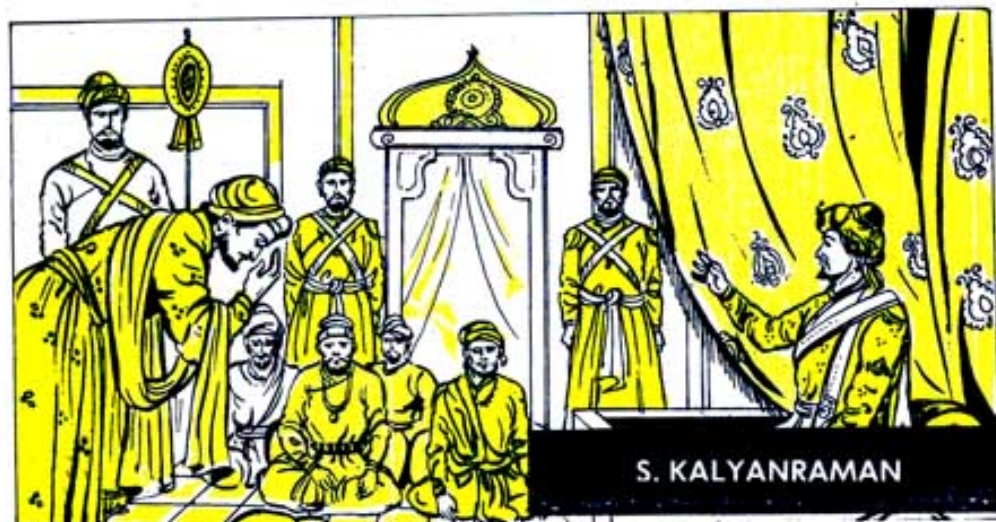
Noble 1 : The mughal is now the Badshah of Kabul and Delhi.

Noble 2 : The young king of Farghana has grown up and become emperor!

Noble 1 : May his reign be long and glorious!

Noble 2 : Inshallah!

End



S. KALYANRAMAN

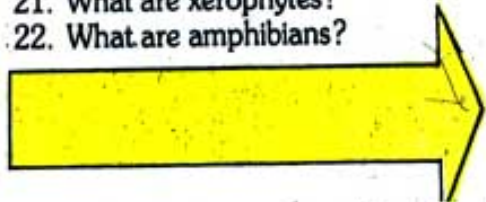
ANIMAL AND PLANT WORLD

QUIZ

Compiled by: V. R.



1. Which is the oldest cultivated fibre plant and where was it grown?
2. Give any two uses of pine tree?
3. Where was cotton first cultivated?
4. Name the simplest forms of plant life?
5. What is the chief material used in the manufacture of paper?
6. What is latex?
7. Quinine is the original cure for malaria. From which tree is it extracted?
8. What are Cacti?
9. Name some of the simplest land plants.
10. What is the process by which plants make food called?
11. How is the palm tree different from other trees?
12. What are the two major classes that all flowering plants fall into?
13. How many species of spiders are there throughout the world?
14. Which is the largest scorpion in the world?
15. What are the simplest of animals called?
16. Which are the simplest multi-celled animals?
17. Which camel has two humps?
18. Which is the smallest bird in the world?
19. Which is the largest mammal in the world?
20. What are parasites?
21. What are xerophytes?
22. What are amphibians?



ANSWERS

1. Hemp is probably the oldest cultivated fibre plant, and it was grown in China as early as 4,500 B.C.
2. 1) Tough durable timber used for building, furniture etc.
2) Gums and resins used for preparing varnishes, polishes
3. Cotton was first cultivated in India, where cotton fabrics were woven as early as 3000 B.C.
4. Bacteria, algae and fungi are the simplest forms of plant life.
5. Wood-pulp.
6. Latex is a milky fluid secreted by many plants. For commercial purposes, however, it is extracted from the rubber tree.
7. Quinine is extracted from the bark of the Cinchona tree.
8. Cacti are chiefly desert plants that are specially adapted to desert conditions.
9. Some of the simplest land plants are the liverworts and mosses.
10. The process by which plants make food, is called photosynthesis.
11. The palm is different from other trees because it has no branches.
12. Mono-cotyledons and di-cotyledons.
13. There are 30,000 species of spiders throughout the world.
14. The largest scorpion in the world is the African black scorpion. It measures 17 cms from head to sting.
15. The simplest animals are called protozoans. They all consist of a single cell.
16. Sponges are the simplest multi-celled animals.
17. The Bactrian camel has two humps.
18. The humming bird.
19. The blue whale.
20. Plants or animals which take nourishment from other living plants and animals, are called parasites.
21. Plants adapted to surviving long periods without moisture are called xerophytes. Eg. Cacti.
22. Creatures that can live both on land and in water are called amphibians.



Suresh : "How did you break your arm?"

Sunil : "I followed the doctor's prescription."

Suresh : "How could you break your arm doing that?"

Sunil : "It flew out of the window, and I followed it."

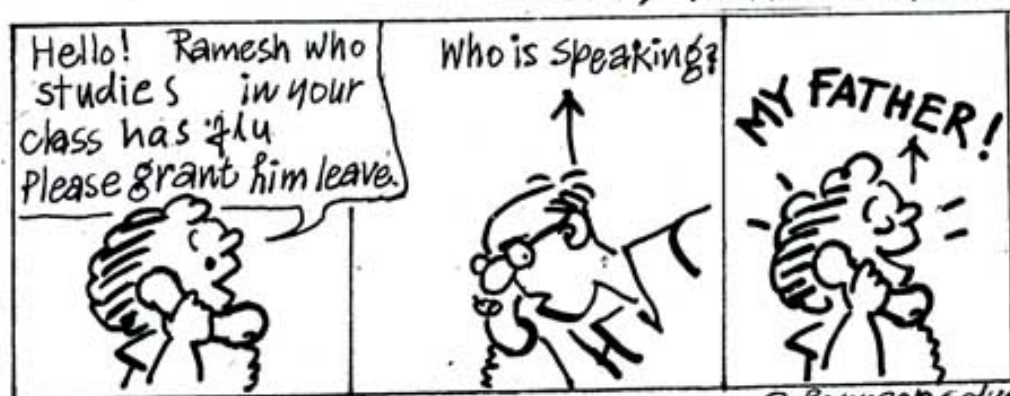
Veda Purushothaman.



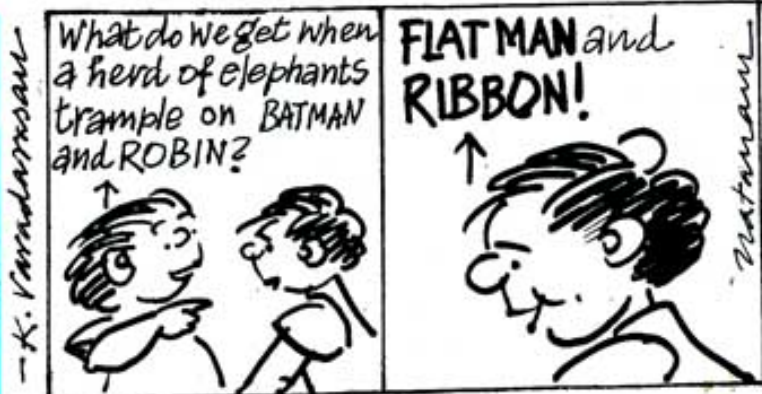
Sent by DILIP KUMAR



Sent by Vishali Chandramoni



-C. Panneer selvam



ASK

Aunty Leela

Q How does the violin produce sound?

A: Ramesh, aged 13, Madurai.

A The violin or any other stringed musical instrument produces sound, because the strings are made to vibrate when it is played upon.

A violin has four 'strings' of different thickness, stretched tautly over a 'bridge' at one end.

When the bow of the violin is drawn across the strings, they start vibrating and produce sound.

The thinner strings produce sounds of a higher pitch, and the thicker ones produce low pitched sounds.

The number of vibrations of a string determines the pitch of the sound. When the violinist pulls the bow across a string without placing his finger on it, he produces one pitch of sound. When he places his finger on the string, the rate of vibration increases and a higher pitch is produced. This is how, by placing his fingers in different positions on the violin, the violinist is able to produce so many different sounds.



Q What is a shadow?

M. Vimla, aged 10, Bangalore.

A Shadows are formed when an object stops all, or part of the light from a direct source. When the sun is hidden by a cloud, you will notice that all shadows disappear. This is because the direct source of light, i.e., the sun is covered.

When the light of the sun reaches an opaque object, it cannot pass through it or go around it. This is because light travels in

straight lines. So a shadow is formed.

Do this simple experiment. Take a small ball and shine a torch on it. A shadow is formed. Now take another source of light (a candle or another torch), and adjust it, so that another shadow of the ball is produced at the same time. The



second shadow is formed because light from the second source also, cannot pass through the ball.

You can watch the different kinds of shadows that are produced by different objects. You can also examine the shadows that are formed at different times of the day. See if you can find out how and why the different kinds of shadows are formed.

Q When was glass first made?
Devika Chander, aged 13, Madras.

A The art of making glass began in Western Asia about 3000

B.C. At that time, glass was made from moulds, or a solid block of glass was carved to the required shape.

It was only in 300 B.C. that glass was blown into shape through blow-pipes, as it is done today.

Q What is a code language?
Ambika J., aged 13, Bangalore.

A In a code language, words, phrases and sentences are replaced with symbols, letters, numbers, etc., according to an agreed system. This means that when a message is sent in code, only the sender and the receiver are able to understand it.

The science of such secret and hidden communication is called cryptology, and records of secret codes date back to 400 B.C.

There are so many ways in which you can make up codes and secret messages. Here is one — can you decipher it?

STICKERS
EASE
CEILING
RITA
EATS
TIES
MAKE

Here's the answer to this code — read the first letter of each word from top to bottom, and the last letter of each word from bottom to top, and the words *secret messages* will appear.

THE FOUR

LIONS

Meera and Arjun were playing as usual in the empty plot behind their house. Today they played football, each taking turns to kick the ball as high possible. Arjun gave the ball a hefty kick and it sailed gracefully over the walls of The Four Lions, a big house on the other side of the empty plot.

"It's fallen inside The Four Lions," whispered Meera, her eyes round.

"It fallen inside The Four Lions," repeated Arjun horror-struck.

The Four Lions was a huge square compound with high walls. Fierce-looking lions, made of cement sat on the walls at each corner of the square. Nobody knew who owned the house, for it remained empty throughout the year.

The gates lay on the other side.

"It's Shekar's football," said Meera.

"And we took it without telling him," said Arjun. Shekar was their elder brother and they were scared of him. They remembered the time when they had borrowed his tran-

sistor radio and broken it. Shekar had been very, very angry. Meera shivered.

"We have to get the ball back somehow!"

"Yes," said Arjun. Let's walk to the other side, to the gates, and see if someone is around."

The huge gates to The Four Lions were rusty, and there were weeds all over the place. The house was dark, except for a dim light shining in one of the upstairs windows.

"There is someone living here!" exclaimed Arjun.

"Let's go and ask them if we can take our ball."

"L.....let's" agreed Meera.

Arjun pushed at the gate, and it opened silently.

They went to the verandah of the house and searched for the bell switch.

"Here it is," said Meera, and she stood on her toes and pressed the switch.

"Trrrring!" it rang.

But no one answered the bell. So they pushed the door.

"Cr-e-e-ak" it went as it slowly opened wide. Suddenly Meera saw their ball held out by a hand from behind a curtain.

She was about to reach out for it when Arjun cried out, "Come out, sir!" Out came a man with a frightening face covered with wrinkles. Arjun and Meera fled in terror towards the gates. But to their horror, just as they reached them, the gates swung shut with a firm click. They were locked in!

Suddenly the Four Lions sprang to life, and rushed at them from all four directions.

One of the lions, his gleaming red eyes glowing like little points of fire, was closing in on them. They stood petrified, their backs pressed against the gates watching it come.

"Ar.....jun!" stammered Meera. "Let's do something!"

She turned towards him.

He was gone!

"Arjun!" screamed Meera. "Arjun! Where are you?"

Meera was terrified. To her surprise, the lion pointed to a hole and ordered. "Walk in!" Meera could not escape, so she obeyed and walked into the hole. It led to a room where there were many machines; all operated by lions. In a corner of the room, she saw Arjun tied with a rope. As she ran towards him shouting, "Arjun!" she was stopped by the man with the frightening face.

"Don't go near him," he warned. "I am going to change him into a lion."



**** Arjun was turned into a lion. The man with the frightening face laughed and laughed....**

Meera began to cry. "Arjun!" she shouted. The man went towards the lion that was once Arjun, and untied it. He then whispered something in it's ear.

The next moment, the lion began to chase Meera. "Oh no! Arjun.... It's me, your sister!" she cried, as she ran towards the door. It was shut tight. "Help!" cried Meera. "Save me! Help!"



Rules :

1. **Continue the story, but do not complete it.**
2. **Your entry should not exceed one hundred words.**
3. **The best contribution will receive a prize of Rs. 25/-**

**** This month's winner**

R. Harini, aged 13,
7/B/5, Kalaimagal Buildings,
11th Avenue, Ashok Nagar,
Madras - 600 083

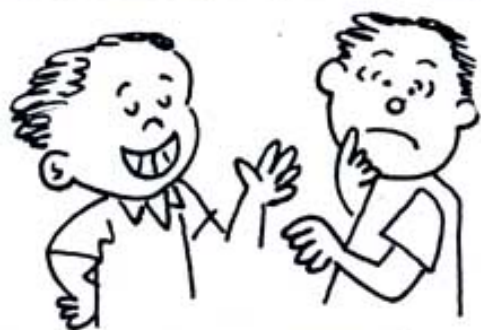
Father : "Sunil, have you filled this fish tank with fresh water?
 Sunil : No, papa. They haven't yet drunk yesterday's water!

T.C. Vijay Raj, aged 14.



Q : Why was the tomato in such a hurry?
 A : It wanted to ketchup!

M.D. Devaraj, aged 13



Ramu : Do you always stammer?
 Shyamu : Only when I speak!

— Visu



Ram : Does your watch tell the time?
 Sita : No, you have to look at it!

Harpreet Kaur, aged 14.

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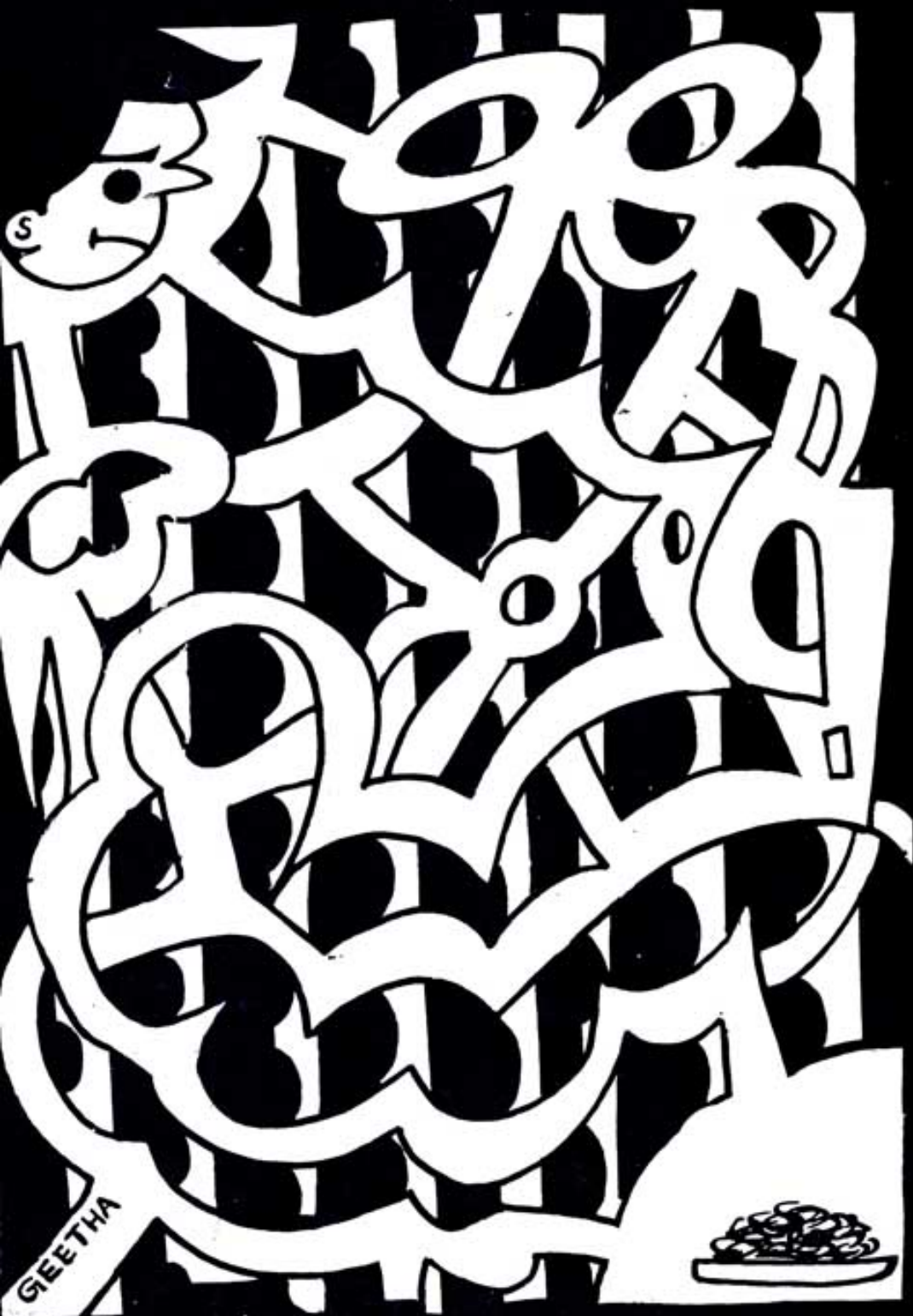
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